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ABSTRACT

The study examines the implementation of P.L. 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, in one metropolitan school system. The first section details the judicial and legislative background, enactment, and politics of implementation of the law. Chapter 2 reviews theories and research about the conditions for educational change, and describes the study's research design in which 9 sample and 7 case study schools were selected from 67 in the district and implementation criteria designated. The school district from which the schools were chosen is examined in the third chapter which touches on merits and disadvantages of the administrative structure, the history of special education in the district, and implementation strategies employed. The next two chapters focus on implementation factors in the elementary and secondary schools selected, with overview of each of the school's student population, administrative climate, teacher morale, and rate of referral to special education. Among findings were that high performing schools shared a commitment and ability to meet individual needs of children as well as a differentiated program structure; and that secondary schools were shown to be very limited in the special education services they offered and in the handicapped populations they served. A final chapter summarizes implementaton progress and problems in the following areas: child find/referral; provision of services in the least restrictive environment; staffings and individualized education programs; the school district; the general experience of P.L. 94-142; the federal, state, and local role; and strategies of leadership at the local level. Among the study's conclusions are that ways must be found to change grass root routines; complete federal delegation to the states of responsibility for implementing the law would be an abdication of federal responsibility; and implementation may be only indirectly, if at all, related to favorable outcomes for children. (CL)

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REGULATIONS AND SCHOOLS:
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EQUAL EDUCATION FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Erwin C. Hargrove, Scarlett G. Graham, Leslie E. Ward,
Virginia Abernethy, Joseph Cunningham, and William K. Vaughn

INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY STUDIES
Vanderbilt University

March 1981

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Preface

This study is the result of the happy collaboration of three political scientists, an anthropologist, a special educator and a statistician. For more than two years, we have been a research family with high moments of discovery and serendipity, and tense moments of disagreement and argument. But our cohesion has permitted us to face and resolve disagreements in ways that, we hope, have improved the book.

The research was supported by the Program for Research on Organizational Processes in Education of the National Institute of Education. We are very grateful to Dr. Fritz Mulhauser, the director of that program, for his substantive intellectual help at every stage of our work. We would wish all scholars to be so fortunate.

Three individual consultants were of special help at different times in our work: Professor Ronald Corwin of The Ohio State University, Professor Richard Elmore of The University of Washington and Dr. James Marver, then of SRI International. Mesdames Mary Leblon, Janice Jones and Diana Shrum were marvelous secretaries at different stages in the work. Ms. Susan Van Riper was a skillful and thorough editor. Mrs. Lottie Strupp kept our budgets in order with great efficiency.

We would like to thank the hundreds of subjects of this study, who are not identified, for their courteous and continuous cooperation.

We hope that this book will be of interest to persons interested in the implementation of policy in general and special education in particular. The responsibility for its errors and limitations are, of course, our own.

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March, 1981

Foreword

There is a "missing link" in the implementation of federal social programs that have a regulatory component.[1] Local governments must comply with the law, as expressed in federal regulations. But, full compliance in social programs often requires organizational change in the institutions which deliver services that is beyond the capacity of the law, regulations and federal administrators to create.

In some regulatory programs, compliance does not require much organizational change. For example, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 required southern states to register black citizens as voters. This was a one-time act of compliance which could become the new norm. Furthermore, if the states did not comply, the Justice Department could remove local voting registrars and substitute its own. It was thus within the capacity of the federal government to carry out the law. There was no missing link.

Most federal regulatory and social legislation does not provide for this federal capacity. Pious and rhetorical statutory phraseology disguises a shortcoming which not even the imperious tone of bureaucratic regulations can correct.

This is a case study of the implementation of P. L. 94-142 (The Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975) which focuses on the "missing link" in one metropolitan school system.[2]

The missing link is not easily identified. Paul Berman and Milbrey McLaughlin make the distinction between the adoption of a program by a school system and its actual implementation.[3] They are writing about curricular innovations which were promulgated, but not required, by the federal office of education. Schools formally adopt new curricular ideas but may fail to implement them, in the sense that the new ideas and procedures are never incorporated into practice. Berman and McLaughlin describe a process of "mutual adaptation" between the new program and local norms as a necessary characteristic of implementation. Adoption of a program is never automatic. This means that federal intent may be modified in practice if implementation is to take place. However, the changes were not mandated and it is quite possible that curricular innovation is strengthened by mutual adaptation.

There is no place for mutual adaptation in a federal regulatory program if compliance with federal intent is watered down in the implementation process.

One could attempt to draw a parallel distinction between pro forma compliance with a federal mandate, the analogue to adoption, and effective compliance, which includes implementation. But, in theory, only the latter is legal. For example, P. L. 94-142 requires that all handicapped children have Individualized Education Programs. If this is the case in a school system in the sense that IEPs are written for all such children, one could call this pro forma compliance. But the language of the law also calls for the use of the IEP as the basis for a truly individualized program for each child. In the strict sense, only this second condition is legal.

The problem is that the federal government can only influence indirectly if at all, the degree of actual implementation which takes place. Even if local shortcomings are detected by inspection teams and the deficient school systems are directed to correct the failures, federal administrators cannot ensure that the actual changes will be any other than pro forma.

This is not the same as the distinction between compliance and providing services of high quality. One would know the latter by the existence of accepted professional standards and the eventual impact on children.

Implementation and high quality are different variables. One could have a high degree of implementation and low or average quality in the services delivered.

The missing link in the implementation of federal regulatory programs, including social programs, is in the difference between the federal reach and grasp. That link is found in the norms and routines of school systems, schools and individual teachers. The administrators of a school system face the same problems which have been attributed here to federal officials. They do not easily or necessarily have much control over what the teacher does in the classroom.

The more one understands about what is necessary to make a program work well at the grass roots, the more intelligently one can devise federal, state and local strategies to influence constructively the factors favorable to implementation at the point of delivery. One could also eliminate futile or harmful strategies. The recognition that discretionary power is held by "street level bureaucracy" calls for the design of federal programs and regulations according to a process of "mapping backward" in which the structure of the program is based on knowledge of what will work at the grass roots.[4]

This book is a study of the implementation of P. L. 94-142 in one metropolitan school system. The research was guided by two primary purposes. First, we wished to learn what elements in schools and their bureaucratic and social environments are conducive to the implementation of the law. Such knowledge might help us understand not only 94-142 but also the implementation of service delivery regulatory programs like 94-142. Second, we have made an effort to "map backward" and ask what federal and state implementation strategies might be conducive to the implementation of 94-142 and programs like it. We hope to contribute here to the developing body of thought about the appropriate and effective division of labor among levels of government in the implementation of national programs.

Footnotes

[1] Erwin C. Hargrove, The Missing Link, The Study of the Implementation of Social Policy (Washington, D. C.: The Urban Institute, 1975).

[2] The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, 20 USC 1401.

[3] Paul Berman and Milbrey Wallin McLaughlin, Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change, Vol. IV: The Findings in Review (Santa Monica: Rand, 1975), vii-viii.

[4] Richard F. Elmore, "Mapping Backward: Using Implementation Analysis to Structure Policy Decisions," Political Science Quarterly (Winter 1979-80).

CHAPTER 1

Background, Enactment and Implementation of 94-142

Matters of public policy do not develop nor are they implemented in a vacuum. By their very nature, public policy matters are issues of concern to segments of the population and must be considered within the climate of the period in which the issues evolve and in which solutions are attempted. Public Law 94-142, The Education of All Handicapped Children Act, is no different; it is the culmination of a series of social and professional forces dating back, at least, to the 1950s.

In order to understand P. L. 94-142, it is necessary to consider the empirical knowledge available to educators (particularly special educators) during this time. In addition, issues regarding the civil rights of various minority groups were an influence that had the effect of raising concerns about equity among professionals. The civil rights movement had laid a constitutional foundation which could be used to argue for expanded and different educational services for handicapped children. These currents, their influence on the provisions of 94-142, and the implementation issues that arise from them are presented and discussed in this chapter.

Empirical Research and Professional Thought

Until very recently, most special education in public schools consisted of programs for mildly mentally retarded children. By 1958, nearly 200,000 children were enrolled in special classes for the mentally retarded. S. A. Kirk, in an early review of research, states that

> the increases in special schools and classes have been accomplished on the basis of logic and the belief that placing retarded children in special classes is more beneficial to them than retaining them in regular grades.[1]

After reviewing more than a dozen studies of the effects of these special classes, Kirk concluded that their record was mixed.

> The general impressions derived from these studies are: (1) The children assigned to special classes are equal to or inferior in academic achievement to those remaining in the regular grades. (2) The children at the lower range of educability show equal or superior academic achievement to similar children left in the regular grades. (3) In social adjustment, the special-class groups appear superior to those left in the regular grades. (4) Retarded children in the regular grades tend to be isolated and rejected by their normal peers.[2]

These special classes were shown to have little educational efficacy for mildly retarded children, with the possible exception of those at the lower end of the EMR range. On the other hand, the social consequences of special classes for these children appeared to be more beneficial.

In 1968, Lloyd Dunn, a major figure in the field of special education, published a critique of special education programs for the mildly retarded.[3] This article proved to be a watershed in the development of services for the mildly retarded and other children with mild handicaps. Its publication in the major journal in special education and the fact that it was written by an important proponent of the development of special education services set the stage for an increase in professional criticism of special education programming and the development of alternatives to traditional service delivery systems. The major points in Dunn's critique of special education and his suggestions for future developments will be reviewed in some detail as a means for better understanding the development of the provisions of P. L. 94-142.

Dunn noted four major reasons for suggesting

> . . . that a large portion of this so-called special education in its present form is obsolete and unjustifiable from the point of view of the pupils so placed . . .[4]

The first argument for change focused on the studies of the efficacy of special classes for educable mentally retarded children. Citing Kirk's review as well as the results reported by others,[5] Dunn argued that lack of a demonstration of effectiveness of special classes was a reason to discover alternate ways of serving children with mild learning disorders.

A second reason for change which Dunn presented was the apparent disadvantage to slow learners and the underprivileged of homogeneous grouping. He supported his argument on this point with information presented in Judge Wright's 1967 decision regarding tracking in the District of Columbia schools.[6] Wright confirmed a lower court decision which abolished tracks because they discriminated against racially and/or economically disadvantaged students. Dunn argued from Wright's decision that special schools and classes could be considered a form of homogeneous grouping, or tracking, and therefore should be discouraged. This position would be particularly true in light of the findings of the efficacy studies.

A third reason for change concerned the process of labeling disabilities of children. While acknowledging that much more research was needed, Dunn extrapolated from the studies by Rosenthal and Jacobson[7] which suggested that labels have an effect on teachers' expectancies for achievement or nonachievement, and argued that these effects must be considered. He also reported work by Goffman and Meyerowitz which indicated that labels have a negative effect upon an individual's self-image, supporting his concern regarding the labeling process.[8]

Dunn's conclusion that regular education programs were better able to serve the needs of special education students by the late 1960s was a fourth reason for questioning the advisability of special classes for children with mild learning disorders. He thought that four major alterations in general education programs suggested that special education should become more a part of general education than had previously been the case. These major alterations included changes in school organization, such as team teaching and ungraded elementary departments; curricular changes, such as alterations in reading and mathematics programs; changes in professional public school personnel, such as the increased employment of specialized personnel and better trained teachers; and hardware changes, such as educational television, videotape equipment, and the use of teaching machines.

Given these reasons for change, Dunn proposed an alternative model of service delivery for mildly handicapped students. He suggested that the vast majority of the mildly handicapped should remain in regular education classes and that special education should act as a resource to these children. He further suggested that special educators should act as resources to the regular classroom teacher in order that mildly handicapped students could be more appropriately educated in the regular classroom. It is important to note that Dunn was suggesting that this was the direction in which special education of the mildly handicapped should develop. A careful reading of this article indicates that Dunn saw this development as extending over several decades, rather than one which could be carried out in a short period of time. He suggested that personnel would need to be trained and/or retrained in order to produce these changes; that new diagnostic techniques and instruments would need to be developed; and that new curricular approaches and programs would have to be designed, validated, and produced.

After the publication of Dunn's article, a plethora of review articles and position statements became available in the literature.[9] Most of these articles focused on the fact that special education classes did not appear to be effective in increasing the academic competence of mildly handicapped students and on the possible negative effects of labeling on teacher expectations and the self-image of children. The particular issue addressed in these articles was that if special education programs produce no academic differences or slight negative effects, labeling might impose an additional burden over and above that of the handicapping condition.[10] Special educators advocated the education of mildly handicapped students in regular programs with the support of special education services. It should be noted that this recommendation was not grounded on an extensive research base, for there were few programs in which the mildly handicapped were integrated. Rather, this change in the organization of special education services was advocated in response or reaction to the postulated negative effects of labeling and the lack of evidence supporting the benefits of special class placement.

It must also be noted that this change occurred in the midst of a period of social activism and civil rights activity. Because many of the students with whom special educators worked were from disadvantaged social groups, these equity issues were very salient. The disproportionate numbers of blacks and Chicano children found in classes for the mildly retarded focused attention on the cultural content of standardized intelligence tests and its consequences for minority groups. The work of Jane Mercer and others called for fundamental changes in the traditional evaluation procedures by which children were labeled mildly retarded and placed in special classes.[11]

Developments in special education for more severely retarded (and other severely handicapped) children took a different direction. Efficacy studies of TMR (trainable mentally retarded) programs in public schools and institutions, while few in number, have generally failed to demonstrate substantial gains for these children.[12] More successful efforts, however, have been conducted in university-based research and demonstration programs. Positive results in these experimental settings formed the basis for increased professional optimism regarding the efficacy of special education for children previously regarded as uneducable. The ease with which teaching techniques developed in highly structured, laboratory settings can be successfully applied on a larger scale in public schools has been challenged by some special educators.[13] Nevertheless, the evidence from model special education programs lent credence to the claim of advocates that all children can benefit from some type of education, and as a matter of equity are entitled to it. This was a crucial argument in the court decisions that laid the groundwork for the passage of P. L. 94-142.

It was in this professional and social climate that the early court cases and legislative actions at state and federal levels occurred. The following sections will review the major judicial cases and the legislative history leading to P. L. 94-142.

Judicial History

The currents culminating in P. L. 94-142 can be traced through a number of judicial decisions, beginning with Brown v. Board of Education in 1954, that defined the rights of all children to education.[14] The courts' jurisdiction in this and later cases has been based upon the "equal protection" and "due process" clauses of the fifth and fourteenth amendments of the Constitution. The rationale was that schools are a major socializing institution and a means of imparting cultural values, so that the exclusion of some children from schools attended by the majority deprives those children of an equal opportunity to make a successful adaptation to the society.

The issue in Brown--the ending of racial segregation through integration of schools and classrooms--is a cornerstone decision in the education for the handicapped although it may at first appear only tangentially related. Both the legal questions upon which Brown was decided and the policy developments that came from it laid the foundation for the judicial role in special education reform. It established the applicability of Constitutional protections to public education, bringing educational issues within the realm of civil rights. In addition, it legitimized subsequent anti-discrimination legislation, and provided an entry for the federal government into education policy. Finally, the plaintiffs' argument in Brown relied on both the stigma and detrimental educational consequences of segregation. These precedents established by the Brown decision were successfully applied by advocates for the handicapped in later cases.[15]

The first victory specifically for handicapped children came in 1971 with Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children v. Pennsylvania (PARC), followed in 1972 by Mills v. Board of Education.[16] On behalf of two classes of institutionalized mentally retarded children, advocates for PARC persuaded the court that 1) "equal protection" entitles the "educable" mentally retarded to a free public school education because the state provides education for other educable, i.e., not mentally retarded children; 2) this should be an appropriate education; and 3) the term "ineducable" is unconstitutionally vague and, in conjunction with "incontestable" and "unanimous expert testimony" to the effect that all children can benefit from education,[17] that it therefore does not provide "rational" grounds for excluding from the public school system even those children classed as trainable, not educable. Due process procedures must be established in order to assure parents' rights to challenge the placement decision of school systems.[18]

PARC is remarkable both for the inclusiveness of the plaintiff category and for the "appropriate education" standard it produced. "Appropriate education" implicitly challenged the basis of the Pennsylvania statute at that time which " . . . excluded from school attendance those students unable to profit from instruction."[19] No students are unable to profit from instruction, according to an assertion of the PARC consent agreement.

This statement does not mean that all children can acquire a standard level of academic achievement. Rather, the purpose of education was redefined to include the kinds of instruction and training aimed at increasing the competence of even the most severely handicapped. For example, expert testimony transmuted into a provision of the PARC consent agreement is as follows:

> All mentally retarded persons are capable of benefiting from a program of education and training, the goals of which are self-sufficiency or, at least, self-care.[20]

Similarly, it has been asserted that the classification "uneducable" is inconsistent

> with research findings that all children are educable, that is, able through instruction to move from relative dependence to relative independence.[21]

Although PARC was resolved by a consent agreement, unanimity in the educational system of Pennsylvania and among professional educators was not overwhelmingly evident. After a period in which little changed, and because of the reluctance of some school districts to conduct the census that would find excluded children, and eventually because of formal objections about the practicality of conducting hearings that included parents and a professional team before placement in special programs, two Masters were appointed for a time-limited term to oversee implementation. Subsequently, one intermediate school district unsuccessfully challenged the court's jurisdiction to hear PARC, but ultimately the central stipulations contained in the consent decree prevailed and were incorporated into Pennsylvania state law.

In a vein paralleling PARC, the Mills v. Board of Education decision required the District of Columbia to provide appropriate education for all school-age children regardless of their mental, physical or emotional handicaps. Moreover, insofar as disciplinary problems arguably have an emotional etiology, expulsion or suspension from school as well as tracking into a special program were made contingent on a "due process" hearing and periodic review.

Mills went farther than PARC in disposing of fiscal considerations as an excuse for not fully implementing all stipulations of the decree. Insufficiency of funds as justification for not appropriately educating the handicapped was specifically discounted by the court:

> Constitutional rights must be afforded citizens despite the greater expenses involved . . . . If sufficient funds are not available to finance all the services and programs that are needed and desirable in the system, then the available funds must be expended equitably in such a manner that no child is entirely excluded from a publicly supported education consistent with his needs and ability to benefit therefrom . . . . The inadequacies . . . certainly cannot be permitted to bear more heavily on the "exceptional" or handicapped child than on the normal.[22]

The Mills position on funding special education has been interpreted liberally in the light of two subsequent decisions. San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriquez,[23] in 1973 established the principle that equality of expenditures per child is an irrelevant standard so long as a school district is providing a minimally adequate education. Originally intended to rebuff the claims of a poor Texas school district for equalization with a wealthier neighbor, the decision has been put to service by advocates for the handicapped with the argument that equal expenditure is irrelevant and insufficient because the mentally retarded cannot receive a minimally adequate education without a much higher level of effort than is necessary for non-handicapped children. More must be spent on the handicapped.[24] The irrelevancy of the equal expenditure criterion was buttressed with Lau v. Nichols in 1974.[25] Here, a large number of Chinese students in San Francisco claimed "constructive exclusion" from education because their instruction was entirely in English, a language they understood little, if at all. The court agreed that equal expenditures do not equate with equal treatment or opportunity because these particular students, because of their inability as a group to benefit from the standard curriculum, constituted a "suspect class." The court concluded that compensatory education was required.

These decisions were first applied specifically to the handicapped in Fialkowski v. Shapp in 1975.[26] Claiming that the education offered them was of no benefit and amounted to constructive exclusion of a "suspect class," multiple-handicapped children successfully sued for the multidisciplinary assessment, structured environments and particularized instruction plans that were said to be required for educating the severely and profoundly retarded.

Not only was expense disqualified as an excuse for failing to educate a "suspect class," i.e., mentally retarded children, but it soon was judged to be no excuse for failing to provide services for an individual. In Hairston v. Droscick in 1976, the court ruled that school attendance for a child with spina bifida and urinary incontinence could not be made conditional on the mother's coming to school several times daily to attend to the child's needs; the school was required to provide the service regardless of cost.[27]

Returning to the formative period of special education case law, a paradoxical variation developed apart from the main trend of litigation. While the plaintiffs in PARC, Mills and related "right to education" cases directed their efforts toward winning more services for all handicapped children, the benefits of existing special education programs were challenged by advocates for "mildly retarded" children. In two notable cases, ethnic and racial minorities, respectively, alleged that 1) they were inappropriately placed in classes that were used to promote resegregation, 2) there was no evidence that special education programs advanced the learning of the mildly retarded over what they could achieve if left in regular classrooms, and possibly irreparably impeded their progress, and 3) the stigma attached to labeling and special placement overwhelmed any slight (and questionable) benefit that might derive from special education.[28]

Specifically, Diana v. State Board of Education in 1970 disputed placement of Mexican-American children in programs for the mentally retarded on the basis of their scores on English language I. Q. tests.[29] This and similar cases were resolved by consent decrees in which it was agreed to use more appropriate testing instruments for children whose first language was something other than English. Larry P. v. Riles in 1972 addressed a similar issue. Here, a court held that students who are wrongfully placed in EMR (educable mentally retarded) classes are irreparably harmed. It also ruled that I. Q. tests are culture-bound, and therefore do not reflect the intellectual abilities of black students.[30] Accordingly, these test results were temporarily banned as a criterion for removal from regular classrooms to special classes for the educable mentally retarded.

The arguments presented in both bodies of litigation are reflected subsequently in P. L. 94-142. The legislation attempts to satisfy the seemingly contradictory demands for greater access to special education services and, concurrently, for greater restraint on their use.

Legislative History

By the time that P. L. 94-142 passed Congress in 1975, the principal elements of the legislation had already been stipulated by the judiciary in one or more school districts, and indeed had been incorporated into law or regulations in more than half the states.[31] Requirements 1) to find all children excluded from education or unable to keep pace with regular classes, 2) to evaluate such children in a non-discriminatory fashion, 3) to prepare individual education plans for them, 4) to hold due process guarantees and procedures before placement, and seemingly 5) to commit more dollars per capita on retarded children than on students in regular programs, had each been decreed by at least one court.

Many of the provisions of 94-142 were already present in federal law as well. The Education Amendments of 1973 (P. L. 93-380) provided for grants to the states for education of handicapped children.[32] Participating states submitted applications that included assurances of non-discriminatory evaluation, due process procedures, and education in the least restrictive environment. But there was no requirement that all handicapped children be included by a specific deadline. The inclusion of this guarantee became the focus of the drive for new federal legislation. The advocate groups that had led efforts in the courts and statehouses became the leaders of a coalition of organizations that saw the enactment of 94-142 as the culmination of their political and legal victories.

At the forefront of the advocacy coalition was the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), a professional association for special education. It was the CEC that developed the model legislation upon which the PARC consent decree, many state laws, and the federal law were based.[33] Other key groups were the Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC), the Children's Defense Fund, and the American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities.

During the four years between the bill's first introduction in Congress (shortly after the PARC decision) and its passage in 1975, the supporters of 94-142 mounted an extensive lobbying campaign. Their argument was based on both philosophic and pragmatic grounds.

The bill was presented as an extension of civil rights protections to a previously neglected segment of the population. The analogy was drawn between handicapped children and the disadvantaged children served under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Research by the CEC and the Children's Defense Fund estimated the number of children excluded from school because of handicaps and described representative cases of their arbitrary treatment and neglect by public schools.[34] Education of the handicapped was presented as the last frontier of educational opportunity.

The long-term economic advantages of educating the handicapped were cited as an additional rationale for passage of P. L. 94-142, but this argument was clearly secondary to humanitarian and civil rights considerations. This view was expressed by legislators as well as by advocate group representatives. Representative Robert Cornell, for example, acknowledged that "some of these people are never going to be able to be self-supporting, or to obtain gainful employment."[35] He went on, however, to stress the philosophical basis for education of all children, regardless of the economic benefits to society:

> I think that we also ought to stress the fact that this education is necessary just to give them a greater enjoyment, and appreciation of living. I would like to think that when Jefferson changed Locke's expression "life, liberty, and property" to the phrase "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," that he envisioned this sort of thing. That we are educating people simply to enjoy the fact that they live.[36]

This humanitarian appeal was bolstered by the Constitutional arguments that had already been victorious in the courts. Many participants in the legislative process felt that the court decisions were the single most important factor in the passage of P. L. 94-142. The political impact of these cases was twofold. First, the growing case law established the legitimacy of congressional action. This was acknowledged by Senator Harrison Williams, chairman of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee:

> Certainly the courts have helped us define the right to an education in the last few years. That is what we are trying to find, the means to carry out the fundamental law of the land.[37]

The second effect of the judicial decisions was to provide an incentive for educational organizations (teachers' unions, state and local school administrators) to support the bill. Because many state education agencies were already operating under similar state legislation or a court order, or were threatened by pending lawsuits, they saw federal legislation as an additional source of funds for something they would have to do anyway.

As in many federal categorical programs, the adequacy of funds and how they would be allocated were of paramount concern to state and local officials. It was understood by all concerned that regardless of the final form of the legislation, congressional appropriations for the new law would probably not reach the authorized level, much less the amount estimated by state education officials to be adequate.

The advocate groups tended to downplay such problems and emphasized the symbolic importance of the law. They relied on the logic used by Judge Waddy in the Mills case, that even the most inadequate of educational expenditures must be redistributed so as to include a proportionate share for the handicapped. The principle of mandatory, universal services, a statutory embodiment of the guarantees set forth in the PARC and Mills cases, was symbolically important even if the resources to fulfill it were insufficient. Frederick Weintraub of CEC voiced this position clearly before both the House and Senate Committees:

> . . . the money is not the primary issue . . . . The first thing is to get the commitment to assure that our children get the education they need.[38]

> . . . the guarantees of an appropriate public education for all handicapped children contained in this legislation are far more important than the design of any formula contained in the same legislation.[39]

No organization worked against the passage of P. L. 94-142 and no witness testified against the principle of public education for all handicapped children. With the CEC as umpire, the state and local officials (Council of Chief State School Officers, National School Boards Association, etc.) and the congressional subcommittees hammered out an acceptable version of the funding formula. With bipartisan support in both House and Senate education committees, the bill passed both houses with large margins and little floor debate.[40]

The concerns involved in educating mildly retarded children--by far the most numerous and those most likely to attend regular public schools--were only sporadically addressed in the hearings on P. L. 94-142. There is little evidence that research on the effects of special education for these children provided the basis for the views expressed on such issues as the effects of labeling and of mainstreaming.

P. L. 94-142, as it was proposed, and finally enacted, retains the use of the traditional diagnostic labels for identifying and classifying handicapped children. The use of such labels has come under heavy attack, not only for the tenuous relationships between evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment, but also for possible stigmatizing effects on the labeled child.[41] These criticisms have been primarily aimed at the labeling of mildly retarded individuals, for whom evaluation and treatment methodologies are the most imprecise and who are able to perceive the stigma of being called retarded. In addition, the racial composition of classes for mildly retarded children in public schools has made the evaluation and labeling process even more susceptible to the these charges.[42]

The fact that educators and psychologists have produced little evidence of the harmful effects of the retarded label *per se* in empirical research has made the labeling critics no less vocal.[43] It is therefore surprising that this viewpoint was rather subdued during the 94-142 hearings.

Perhaps one reason for the lack of opposition to the traditional labeling practices was that the organizations representing children with various types of handicaps acted in coalition; advocates for the retarded, the physically handicapped, the deaf, and the blind joined together to make common presentations before the congressional committees. The interest of the mildly retarded in ridding themselves of that label was not equally shared by advocates for other handicapped groups.

Representatives of children with severe orthopedic, sensory, and cognitive disabilities were more interested in obtaining previously denied educational services that the handicapped label would guarantee them under the new law than in the effect of the label itself. A representative of the American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, a totally deaf person, made this clear. Questioned by Senator Williams about possible incentives in the law for excessive or inappropriate labeling, he replied that the provision of educational opportunity was his organization's overriding concern and that too much emphasis on the stigmatization of labeling could deny appropriate services to many children.[44] The Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC) is an organization largely composed of parents of severely retarded and multiple-handicapped children. These parents are primarily concerned with getting such children out of custodial settings and into special educational programs.

The issues of labeling are related to those regarding "mainstreaming" and the capacities of regular teachers to work effectively with mildly handicapped children in regular classrooms. The preference for maximum possible integration of handicapped and non-handicapped children was repeatedly stated by witnesses, with reference to the harmful effects of excessive segregation of children in special classrooms or separate schools.[45]

Such allegations are not without empirical support, but the evidence is ambiguous. Critics of special classes for mildly retarded children point out that most studies fail to demonstrate the educational benefit of such classes, compared with academic progress of similar children in regular classes.[46] By the same token, however, the superiority of mainstreaming has not been established either; most of this research has simply failed to find significant differences between the effects of regular and special classes.[47]

The possible reasons for these null findings, both methodological and substantive, have been explored in detail elsewhere.[48] The important point is that the lack of consensus on how best to educate mildly retarded children was seldom acknowledged during the hearing process.

The reasoning behind the advocates' support for mainstreaming took the form of a civil rights argument. Just as in the case of racial segregation, they suggested, separate is not equal. If it cannot be shown that handicapped children achieve at higher levels in separate classes or facilities, they should as a matter of equality be kept in regular educational programs.

If pressed on this issue, advocates had difficulty justifying their position. When questioned by Representative Cornell on the educational benefits of mainstreaming, a spokesman for ARC replied that it was his "very strong personal opinion" that handicapped children should be in regular programs because they are fellow human beings and therefore equal under the law.[49]

The ARC representative went on to suggest that mainstreaming of the handicapped would aid the development of flexibility and tolerance in non-handicapped children. This is one of the few points on which research findings have been fairly unequivocal; the integration of mildly retarded children in regular classrooms does not seem to increase their social acceptance by other children.[50] It appears likely that mainstreamed children will often be socially isolated from their non-retarded peers.[51]

This discussion suggests that clues on implementing P. L. 94-142 for mildly handicapped children are not easily found in research on special education and its effects. For the numerous handicaps of mild retardation, learning disabilities, and emotional disturbance, controversy surrounds not only the identification of such conditions, but how best to intervene once they have been discovered. Other observers consider this lack of knowledge characteristic of the entire field of special education. As summarized by David Kirp et al.:

> The response to almost any interesting question concerning the education of the handicapped is either that the answer is unknown or that no generalizable beneficial effect of a given treatment can be demonstrated.[52]

P. L. 94-142, following the lead of the case law, established an "appropriate" education as the standard of effective implementation of the statute's intent. The courts have not defined "appropriate," although they have articulated a preference for "least restrictive" alternatives as part of what constitutes an appropriate program. Some courts have established class size and staff-student ratios as criteria. Section 504 (of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) relies on equivalency as the standard of appropriateness--the education provided to handicapped students must be as adequate as that for the non-handicapped.[53]

An "appropriate" education under P. L. 94-142 is one that results from an individual planning conference, including specified participants, and is documented in an IEP, following a specified form. Thus, the legal standard is a process, not a result, "in the belief that a fair process will produce an acceptable result.[54]"

Both the advocate groups and the legislators who backed passage of the law placed their faith in these procedures rather than in the establishment of substantive guidelines. In addition, the problem of inappropriately identifying children as handicapped was addressed not through defining specific handicapping conditions but through a statutory ceiling on the percentage of children who could be eligible for funds.

The efficacy of the planning conference and the IEP as the central components of service delivery was challenged by only a few participants in the congressional hearings. The American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) questioned the preparation of regular teachers and principals to carry out this kind of instructional planning, and suggested a pilot project to develop guidelines for the process. ASHA noted that the IEP requirement in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 had not worked well, and that no mechanism for enforcement or accountability could assure the quality of IEPs.[55] The commissioner of education's statement also pointed out the lack of evidence that IEPs improve the quality of education or of parent-school communication.[56]

Nevertheless, Congress held high hopes for the use of planning conferences and IEPs; strong supporters of the bill considered it one of the most significant provisions of the legislation. Floor speeches by Senators Williams, Randolph, and Stafford indicated faith in the IEP process. Not only would it produce the most appropriate education for the child, it would also be a vehicle for parent education and for sensitization of teachers unaccustomed to dealing with handicapped children.[57] So enamored were legislators with the IEP concept that the original version of the Senate bill required that an individual planning conference be held three times a year for each handicapped child. After consideration of the administrative burden this would entail, it was amended to require only an annual meeting.[58]

The emphasis on administrative procedures in P. L. 94-142 is essentially a substitute for an accepted educational technology that can be used in regular public schools to educate handicapped children. This reliance on procedure also lends itself to a particular conception of the federal role in social programs, one that is oriented more toward achieving a uniform level of compliance than toward the strengthening of state and local education agencies. Advocates for the handicapped explicitly favored this role and believed it to be a necessary one. They felt that the handicapped, like other minority or disadvantaged groups, lack the political clout at the state level to get the services and resources they need. Thus, not only federal funds but also strong compliance mechanisms are required, just as they have been adopted to protect the civil rights of blacks, women, and others.

The Ford administration did not share this philosophy regarding federal programs and the federal role in education in particular. The administration not only believed that P. L. 94-142 represented a "profound and undesirable expansion of federal responsibilities" in education, but was also skeptical of the ways in which the law sought to achieve the desired results for handicapped children. Both the commissioner of education and President Ford expressed doubt that uniformity of procedure and compliance with the many administrative requirements of P. L. 94-142 would enhance state and local capabilities to deliver truly individualized education.[59] President Ford signed the bill reluctantly, in the hope that it would be amended before the 1978 implementation deadline. A veto would probably have been overridden, since only 10 senators and 44 representatives had voted against the bill.

The legislative history of P. L. 94-142 indicates that the law was viewed as an important symbol by its supporters, representing a national commitment to the constitutional rights of handicapped children. There is, however, a great deal of uncertainty regarding the educational theory and practice necessary to deliver on this commitment. The issues of implementation arising from this uncertainty were addressed primarily by resorting to administrative and procedural requirements. This necessarily entails a federal role that emphasizes uniform compliance. There is little guidance in the legislative record on questions of organizational change and effective service delivery, especially in regular public schools. State and local education agencies were to cope with these issues as implementation of the law went forward.

The following analysis of the prospects for implementation of 94-142 are derived from a more general understanding of the implementation of social policy.

The Politics of Implementation

P. L. 94-142 is both a regulatory and a redistributive law. It is regulatory in that it creates rules for schools to follow in order to ensure equity for specific categories of persons. It is redistributive in that money and services are to be allocated to the needs of those persons and there is the implication of lessened resources for others as a result.

The Regulatory Aspect

1. The law represents a relatively new kind of regulatory policy which seeks to extend human rights according to principles affirmed a decade earlier in the passage of the Civil Rights Act.

Regulatory social programs are characterized by what James Q. Wilson calls "client politics."[60] These are programs in which the benefits are concentrated and the costs are widely distributed. A well-organized group prevails in securing government protection and others have little incentive to organize in opposition, if they even know of the policy.

Wilson does not apply the concept to social policy but uses it to characterize a "producer dominance" model through which industries and occupations enjoy subsidies and protective regulations.

However, it can be applied easily to social policy, particularly if one adds a dash of another Wilson concept, "entrepreneurial politics.[61]" In this case, action is initiated by politician entrepreneurs who tap latent public sentiments for actions supported by widely shared values. The passage of one law prepares the way for subsequent extensions of the principle.

Client politics in behalf of social regulation is legislation passed in the wake of more general measures, through entrepreneurial politics, which establishes the general principle. The overwhelming legitimacy of the general principle is one reason that opposition groups do not form. The redistributive consequences of the programs are disguised by appeal to widely shared symbols and principles. Thus, Title IX of The Civil Rights Act was an extension to women of principles already established. Laws to protect handicapped children in the schools and older persons were simply extensions of the same human rights entitlement principle. The politics of passage had all the attributes of "client politics."

Peter Schuck describes the ingredients which were present in the passage of The Age Discrimination Act of 1975:

> It promised benefits to a visible, politically influential group that all Americans hoped some day to join; its sponsors argued that it could confer these benefits at no additional cost; its redistributional implications were not clear, or at least not noticed; and it was a small and inconspicuous part of a large omnibus bill that both Congress and the Administration supported. Perhaps most important, it drew strength from the moral legitimacy and rhetorical forces of the 1960s and early 1970s . . . .[62]

2. Ambiguities, internal contradictions and uncertainties about implementation are simply turned over by Congress to the bureaucracy. To do otherwise is to risk the political credit which comes to legislative entrepreneurs with the beneficiary group.

Schuck analyzes the ambiguities and contradictions in the ADA which were buried in legislative rhetoric. For example, the definition of "age discrimination," which was to be outlawed, was so broad as to be useless--i.e.:

> any act or failure to act, or any law or policy that adversely affects an individaul on the basis of age.[63]

There were no boundaries and the goal was not reconciled with other social goals which might mandate the priority of values other than age. Possible conflicts between different age groups were not considered. For example, if a community mental health center devotes more resources to young than to old people because money is limited and therapeutic prospects are better with the young, is this age discrimination?

3. Implementing bureaucracies fail to confront internal contradictions in policies for the same reasons that Congress fails. Administration would be thrown into turmoil if conflicts were exposed. The strategy is to create a regulatory program which embodies the principles enunciated in the statute in as pure a form as possible. To do less is to admit that the implementing agency has discretion to interpret the statute, which is to open Pandora's box.

For example, the office for civil rights has made no effort to moderate its regulations in regard to physical facilities for the handicapped or equity in women's school athletics despite problems of cost in the one case and vagueness in the other.[64]

For the most part, Congress and the President do not provide guidance to bureaucracy. Congressman Vanik, the original sponsor of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which calls for physical facilities for the handicapped, was surprised that the regulations reached so far beyond his intent. But he and Congress did nothing. President Carter permitted the regulations to go forward.[65]

The political strength of OCR's constituencies reflects not only their organization but their moral strength. Congressmen do not wish to oppose civil rights nor, for example, do universities. Who will stand up and fight against the handicapped?

4. The actual enforcement of regulations does not match their absolutist language if criteria are absent for weighing the relative importance of conflicting principles.

For example, how are department programs to allocate their scarce funds in the face of conflicting principles? May CETA's prime sponsors focus their programs upon younger workers without discriminating against older workers under the ADA? May medical schools limit admissions to persons under 35 in terms of a cost-benefit rule which penalizes those over 35?[66]

The result is that agencies do not change their rhetoric but make selective compromises with enforcement. One reason is limited resources for inspection and litigation. But an even more compelling reason is the inability of government to force private institutions to accept policies which are very expensive or require great organizational change even if the regulated subscribe to the principles underlying regulation. The implementation of social regulatory policy may therefore be random, unrelated to any coherent strategy of either policy or implementation and ultimately arbitrary.

Agencies are unable to develop intelligent compromise strategies. Congress and the President provide no guidance. The courts exercise discretion which is essentially arbitrary. Actual implementation becomes a will-o'-the-wisp which is subject to countless contradictory and invisible pressures.

P. L. 94-142 is an example of client politics in which well-organized minorities prevailed in Congress over minimal opposition because of their reluctance to attack the strong blanket of legitimacy accorded the proposal in the wake of the Civil Rights Act and the general principle of human entitlement.

The ambiguities and contradictions in the law, and the thought which preceded it, were not confronted by Congress but were passed to the implementing bureaucracy. The question of the utility of categorical labeling of children was never squarely faced. The presumption that special students would fare better in regular classes was based on insufficient and contradictory evidence. No attention was given to whether school departments, and schools as organizations, would actually be able to develop IEPs and use them as guides to genuinely individualized education. Schools are bureaucracies and such organizations prefer standardization. Finally, no attention was given to the question of whether the technology of regular education was capable of dealing with special students.

Therefore, the questions of implementation of the program for the mildly handicapped cover two broad areas. First, procedural steps were substituted for substantive requirements in regard to the diagnosis and placement of children. The hard substantive questions about appropriate treatment were avoided. Second, no thought was given to whether or not schools would be able to adapt their routines to meet the spirit as well as the letter of the law.

The Redistributive Aspect

There are at least two kinds of redistributive policies. Programs focused on human development, such as education and employment training, have a greater political legitimacy than programs based upon a selective welfare principle such as aid to families with dependent children and social services for the poor. Human development programs appeal to the American ethic of equality of opportunity and presume no fault on the part of the recipients. Welfare programs create strong rules of eligibility in order to keep out false claimants and provide minimal services in order not to provide a better life than individuals can secure for themselves. They are enveloped in an aura of suspicion.[67]

Redistributive programs have greater political legitimacy to the degree that they extend to more than one social class. Thus, Medicare, which is an entitlement for all old people, has greater legitimacy than Medicaid, which is only for the poor.

P. L. 94-142 is a human development program which serves the children of all social classes. The coalition of groups in the society which support it speaks for all handicapped children. This has given the law great political legitimacy. Such programs are easier to implement than welfare programs because they have less negative and cumbersome rules about eligibility.

However, the very expansionary character of entitlement programs like 94-142 can stimulate political opposition once the redistributive implications become apparent. The parents of children who are not handicapped may begin to resent the disproportionate expenditures on handicapped children required by the law. This is particularly so in cases in which Congress does not follow up its symbolic action with sufficient funding and the states and localities are left to pay the difference.

One strategy with which school districts may anticipate and dampen such a political backlash is to dilute the implementation of the law so that it is not perceived as redistributive. There could be minimal "mainstreaming," for example. A great deal of dilution can occur without the knowledge of federal regulators, particularly if the emphasis is upon mechanical compliance with regulations.

Programs which are both regulatory and distributive are the most difficult of all social programs to implement because they confront two sets of obstacles. First, compliance by local school systems with the requirements of the law and subsequent regulations must be secured. This is not easily achieved in a continental federal system. The capacities of federal and state governments are stretched very thin in such efforts. Second, the local institutions which deliver services must adopt not only the letter but also the spirit of the law in a search for the best ways to deliver services. It is an open question whether federal or state governments can have much positive influence over the strengthening of such local institutional capacities.[68] Indeed, a strong emphasis from the top upon compliance may be antithetical to the local search for effective delivery of services. A bureaucratic approach from above which stresses meeting formal requirements may be answered in kind, with the consequent confusion of form with substance and a neglect of quality of service.

Both the regulatory and redistributive themes thus direct our attention to the school district and especially the individual school as the settings in which the fate of this law, and the children it is to serve, will be resolved. We postulate that a considerable degree of organizational change will be required at the grass roots before we can say that the law has been implemented.

First, it is assumed that, without regard for its humanitarian intent, the federal mandate to change an aspect of the local educational system will "feel" authoritarian to at least some of the administrative and service delivery personnel charged with its implementation. The authoritative character of the mandate will be perceived as having originated outside the system, as requiring monitoring and evaluation from outside the system, and as a latent threat of coercion through control of funding from outside the system.

Second, perception of the authoritative character of the mandate will inevitably be colored by the threat it poses to professional and organizational interests. For example:

a. The effort to find previously neglected children is likely to reveal that many are in regular classrooms but have been receiving inadequate services. If this is the case, close collaboration between regular and special education teachers and divisions will be necessary. Considerable bargaining may take place. New integration of both regular education and special education services will be required, and this will not only upset the existing balance of rights and responsibilities but threaten the inertia that pervades many organizations.

b. Regular classroom teachers may not be enthusiastic about receiving handicapped children under the "least restrictive environment" provision. It may be difficult for school systems to provide incentives to "mainstream" through increased aides and reduction in class size.

c. The task of developing individual plans for the education of each handicapped child, including those who are mainstreamed, challenges the traditional emphasis of public education which has focused on the teaching of groups rather than individuals. On the contrary, the labeling of children for special education has been congruent with organizational rigidity because it both segregates children who can be disturbing to regular teachers and serves the organizational purposes of special education through reducing ambiguity. The special needs of children may also be served through labeling, although the medical or psychological categories that are often employed are not necessarily related to the educability of children. Thus, the development of behavioral measures for placement which are tied specifically to the education of individuals will require a new orientation from both regular and special education as well as an organization in which their work is closely interwoven on a task basis.

d. There will be specific tensions in special education. In the first instance, professional staff in that division will have to learn to give more time to in-service education for the upgrading of the skills of the regular teachers so that routine problems can be given to regular classroom teachers. Special education staff have one incentive to "mainstream" children because the same amount of money comes to special education for a child who is in a regular school but receives part-time special education help as for a child who is in a self-contained special education situation. But, the regular education divisions have no financial incentives to receive these children. They are not rewarded for mainstreaming. On the other hand, there will be professional concerns among special educators about whether mainstreaming is good for individual children. Decline of the bureaucratic sphere of special education may also follow from mainstreaming; there will also be a decline of autonomy and increasing tension with regular education, and no bureaucratic unit seeks trouble or tension.

These illustrations of the general organizational problems that will face school systems in regard to 94-142 suggest that there will be resistance to change. Each of these problems, and others like them, can be resolved only if forces are set in motion to break down barriers between general and special education and to provide incentives for collaboration and innovation from each side.

At this point, we stress the distinction between compliance with a regulatory mandate and the development of effective service delivery strategies in terms of that mandate. For example, a school system may succeed in identifying, labeling, and providing for new services to a given group of handicapped children. Such changes would be cited in figures reported upward and would pass for compliance. These actions might be induced by an external mandate. But, the actual character and quality of the services delivered to those children might not change greatly and might, in fact, be beyond the reach of the mandating authority. It is therefore important to ask how far such a mandate may effectively reach within an organization.

The literature on the efforts to implement laws like P. L. 94-142 in the states is a guide to our theory and research design. The following general propositions sum up the range of experience.[69]

1. Pressures to identify, label, and place large numbers of children in a brief period of time serve the requirement for a comprehensive response better than they do the needs of individual children.

2. An absence of official priorities about the sorts of problems to be addressed leads to priorities being developed at school system and school level according to the organizational and professional predispositions of the implementors.

3. Regular classroom teachers oppose "mainstreaming" if it is not accompanied by increased resources.

4. Principals who wish to keep or put handicapped children in regular classrooms are dependent upon the willingness of their teachers to do so.

5. The more experience a school system has had in dealing with handicapped children according to criteria similar to those of 94-142, the fewer problems the system will encounter in implementing the law.

6. Resistance to change comes from all those in the school system whose professional status is threatened:

a. Special educators wish to protect their separate status.

b. Regular teachers wish to banish children with special problems.

c. Psychologists and other specialists will make diagnoses but because they are specialists, they resist drawing implications for education.

d. Principals will not wish to have conflict and turmoil among teachers.

7. Because of resistance, strong pressures are required to create change:

a. Parent and advocate groups must be active.

b. Special educators must be made secure so that they are free to press for innovation.

c. There must be a strong commitment by school administrators.

These propositions capture the delicate balance between organizational rigidity, or stability if one prefers, and organizational change.

This returns us to the question of efficacy of federal regulatory strategies and whether both formal and informal implementation systems can be developed which will stimulate constructive action at the grass roots. One of the purposes of our study is to uncover possible linkages of this kind.

There are two kinds of implementation problems. First, the prescribed interventions may not work. Thus, the "mainstreaming" of handicapped children could bring them more harm than good, contrary to the assumption behind the law. Second, it may prove difficult to test the merits of interventions because of institutional obstacles to their implementation. For example, schools may not implement "mainstreaming" sufficiently because of a lack of incentives by regular teachers to accept handicapped students in their classes.

In an ideal world, the treatments and interventions prescribed in a social program would have been tested and found to be efficacious by research demonstrations and in the ordinary settings in which they are to be implemented. This was not the case with 94-142 and it is seldom the case with any social program. The evidence for educational programs for the severely handicapped as a result of special programs has been obtained primarily from carefully controlled and financed university research settings. It was this evidence which the courts and Congress considered in the decisions which have been described in this chapter. No one pointed out in any of this testimony that very little was known about the capacities of regular school systems to provide the same kind of careful, intensive treatment.

By the same token, the evidence about the consequences of mainstreaming mildly handicapped children with children in regular classes was incomplete. Dunn and others argued, from evidence, that they fared no worse than if they were separated. The implication was that special education lacked efficacy. However, such evidence was drawn from a limited number of settings and there was no way to estimate the effects on both regular and special children of an increase in mainstreaming.

It is futile to argue for more research and development to resolve questions of this kind in the face of a political movement which is at the crest of its strength and wishes to strike at the opportune time. The dynamics of politics do not wait for research findings and P. L. 94-142 was ripe for passage in 1975. The courts had initially forced Congress to set a national policy and the high tide of human rights legislation had not yet receded.

A second kind of implementation question is whether the institutions which are to carry out the law are willing and capable of doing so. It is possible to make "implementation estimates" in advance about this matter but the state of the art is very crude. Many practical problems can be anticipated when the implementing federal agency casts proposed regulations on the waters. But, it is difficult to get objective assessments of actual implementation problems because federal officials get caught in the cross fire of advocate groups, who often make incompatible demands. Regulations are the results of bargains rather than estimates.

In this chapter, the intellectual and political roots of the law and their possible consequences for its implementation have been examined. Chapter 2 considers the available knowledge about schools and the conditions for educational change, in order to assess the implementation problems that can arise from local institutional characteristics. The combination of these two perspectives form the basis for our research on the implementation of the law in one local setting.

Footnotes

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[22] Haggerty and Sacks, op. cit., 971.

[23] *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez*, 411 U. S. 1 (1973).

[24] Haggerty and Sacks, op. cit.

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[29] *Diana v. State Board of Education*, Civ. No. C-7037REP, (N.D. Cal. 1973).

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CHAPTER 2

Modeling the School System

A model is a touchstone to reality but not reality itself. It posits the existence of an underlying logic which explains patterns, relationships and results in a coherent form. The dominant model of American public school systems in the research literature is one of bureaucracies which are led by central hierarchies (tight coupling) on matters of high policy and administrative housekeeping, and are greatly decentralized (loosely coupled) in regard to most educational matters.

Tight management from the top includes business affairs, the selection and certification of personnel, appointments to administrative positions, the selection of an official curriculum and all important policy questions which involve accountability to the school board, the courts and the larger community. Failure to control high policy matters can open Pandora's box.

Loosely coupled management includes the autonomy of teachers in the classroom, the light control of principals over teachers in regard to teaching, the limited control of higher administrators over principals on instructional questions and the minimal control that superintendents exercise, on instructional questions, over middle level administrators. There are several different but overlapping explanations for the internal logic of this model:

1. Victor Thompson argues that a conflict between the principle of bureaucratic control from the top and a centrifugal pushing outward of responsibility and autonomy is inherent in all modern organizations occupied by bureaucratic administrators and specialized professionals. He sees the

logic of history as favoring those who possess the knowledge necessary for the organization to function well, i.e., the professionals.[1]

The difficulty with this argument is that it is too general. There are quite different patterns within it. The administrators dominate General Motors and the engineers are for hire. The doctors run the National Institutes of Health and the administrators manage housekeeping. Schools are even more complex. Teachers are not autonomous professionals like doctors and lawyers. They need the organization to practice their profession. Yet, central organizational control is uneven.

2. John Meyer and Brian Rowan are among the creators of the general model delineated above. Their central contribution is the idea that educational bureaucracies perform the functions of producing graduates who are certified for the world of work. The legitimacy of the enterprise and the resources accorded to it by society depend upon a general faith. Therefore, everything possible is done to preserve appearances and as little as possible is done to inquire about actual performance. To do so might call the entire enterprise into question by revealing failures and uncertainties. Bureaucratic uniformity is sought in all surface appearances and education is decoupled and left to drift.[2]

Meyer and Rowan give a survey of the literature which reports very limited oversight of classroom teaching across school systems, little interaction among teachers, little educational discussion between principals and teachers and little use of achievement data to judge teachers and schools.[3]

The literature also shows tight organizational control of establishing credentials and hiring of teachers, assignments of students to class and scheduling and allocation of space, funds and materials.[4] Schools get money from central bureaucracies which rule on what constitutes valid education and education is said to occur when the rules are followed.[5]

Decoupling is accompanied by confidence that all are doing their jobs. Hard questions about the reality need not be asked.[6] Most planned instruction is never implemented and most instructional innovation is not organizationally planned. Feedback upward about performance is resisted.

Such behavior is rational because organizations must have the confidence of their environments, not simply be in rational exchange with them.[7] The difficulty with this elaboration of the model is that there is no provision in for administrators, principals or teachers who are trying to do a good job despite the formalisms. Much of the formalism may in fact be a protective myth within which a great deal of creative administration takes place in regard to instruction. This is a limitation of modeling. Variables which do not connect to the inner logic of the gestalt are left out.

3. Willis Hawley contends that the distinguishing feature of education is that there is a lack of agreement on goals and very little knowledge about how to achieve any goals. The technology of teaching is too weak to join means to ends effectively. The consequence is that certain curricula are mandated, become orthodox and are eventually superseded by new orthodoxies which pass on in their time. But it is not clear that children are affected one way or the other.[8] This is a view similar to that of Meyer and Rowan with greater emphasis upon weak technology. All professions prefer to emphasize "efforts" rather than results. The patient of a brilliant doctor may die or the client of a lawyer may lose his case. But among the professions, education appears to be particularly weak in acceptance of and self-confidence in a shared methodology.

4. Karl Weick does not present an internal logic so much as suggest coping mechanisms which are developed by such a system. He sees certain advantages that might come with loose coupling. Decentralization preserves stability in the face of shocks like a fiesty school board. A fragmented system may be more responsive to the variegated parts of its environment. Adaptation can be localized. By the same token, novel solutions may bubble up because there is latitude to try them. Breakdown and failure may be partial and not affect the entire organization. Finally, time and money are not wasted in frustrating attempts to coordinate people throughout a system.[9]

Weick implicitly assumes that there may be a great concern with the effectiveness of education in the subparts of the system precisely because it is loosely coupled. Again, this is an empirical question.

Weick is also very careful to point out that organizations are webs which are loosely and tightly joined simultaneously. The task of the scholar is to find out which parts are tight and which loose and how activity in one area affects, by implication, that in the others. One may not understand why looseness persists until tight controls which absorb the energies of leaders are explained.[10]

There is a clear implication here that educational organizations are not uniform and that a general model will not suffice. One must explore particular details.

Summation

If one accepts the general principle of the simultaneous existence of tight and loose coupling, there appears to be a missing dimension. Cooperation along vertical and horizontal lines is weak. Either those at the top give orders or they defer to discretion exercised below. This dichotomy may appear within individual schools as well as throughout the system. This means that there is very little opportunity for collegial planning and learning from experience which is shared across jurisdictional lines.

The World of the School

The subtitle is used deliberately because, to a large extent, schools are worlds to themselves inhabited by principals, teachers and students. A school can be a "house without windows." The question for us is what forces open the windows and brings in the fresh air?

There has been only a limited amount of research about the actual authority relationships between principals and teachers, among teachers and between teachers and students, as possible determinants of educational quality. Much of the literature appears to be hortatory in its insistence that principals and teachers should assume greater responsibility for educational policy and practice in order that ideas may be tested where they are used.[11]

There are two broad points of view about the willingness and capacity of principals and teachers to assume such responsibilities. Seymour Sarason and Harry Wolcott present the less hopeful view on the basis of case studies of one school in New Haven, Connecticut and a study of an elementary principal in Oregon.[12] Sarason develops a theory of the conditions for innovativeness in schools out of a case study of the introduction of the "new math" into an elementary school. His primary assumption is that changing a curriculum involves changing the informal social system of the school because patterns of teaching reflect stable social relationships.[13] One cannot impose a new curriculum upon teachers by fiat. Change must be introduced according to knowledge of the workings of the internal social structure of the school.[14] This means that opposition must be squarely faced.[15] New patterns must be created to replace old ones if change is to take root.[16]

According to Sarason, there is no vehicle in the culture of schools allowing teachers to act together to change their behavior. He gives an example from the case study in which his research team noted a low level of student-initiated questions in classes. Discussions with the teachers brought out explanations. Teachers teach as they were taught. They are not exposed to learning theory. They seek law and order to be sure of covering a given amount of material in a specified time. The discussion prompted the teachers to act together to change their behavior but Sarason regards this as unusual practice.[17] In his view, teachers are psychologically alone; they spend their days with children rather than professional peers.[18]

He contends that teachers who become principals know little about the job in advance and there is little in their experience to suggest that principals will be innovators.[19] A new principal discovers that a variety of personalities require curbing in order to obtain order.[20] Furthermore, teachers resist orders from a principal to change their teaching habits. Passivity about instruction on the part of principals is often the result.[21] The introduction of outside specialists to help teachers further undermines the authority and self-confidence of the principal.[22]

But Sarason also suggests that while inflexible principals blame the school system for their inaction, flexible ones accept responsibility and see latitude for action;[23] they control their own behavior.[24] He concludes that the principal is the key to the quality of life in a school and suggests that principals could introduce many educational innovations long before they become official policy if they were encouraged to do so.[25]

Wolcott presents much the same picture of principals. They are most often chosen because they have shown that they will not challenge the educational hierarchy.[26] The position, which provides status and income, is seen as an end in itself rather than a stepping stone upward. Survival in the job becomes more important than innovativeness. A principal seeks to keep all the constituencies of a school happy. Autonomy is achieved through limiting boldness of action.[27]

Within the school, the principal is confronted with the invisible folkways through which teachers resist change. Young, innovative teachers are brought into line by older ones and the principal finds it difficult to evaluate the standpatters in a way that changes their attitudes or actions.[28] Evaluation of teaching is such a subjective task that it is more form than reality. In fact, it reaffirms the status quo.[29]

Wolcott does not see principals as change agents. Either higher administration introduces change by fiat or pockets of innovation develop among teachers.[30] As a result, most principals let the position run them. They "fight fires" and have little sense of priority.[31] The real change agents are young teachers, young parents and the students themselves.[32]

Wolcott is less hopeful than Sarason but he agrees with him that principals have more latitude than they take. Most seek to be managers when they might be leaders by creating a sense of purpose among others.[33]

These studies of single schools are limited but most valuable in delineating the strong internal and external pressures for stability in schools. However, other studies reveal a wider range of possibilities and present ideas of how such stable structures might be loosened.

Paul Berman and Milbrey McLaughlin studied the introduction of 100 efforts to introduce curricular innovation in 20 states. The stimulus was federal, under Title III of ESEA. The study covered 100 superintendents or other key LEA officials, 171 principals, and 1,072 teachers. Superintendents and principals received personal interviews and teachers were surveyed.[34] The purpose was to understand the conditions under which the projects took root and were continued after federal funding disappeared.

Their primary finding was that principals are the key to the creation of an organizational climate in which innovation is accepted and worked into routines by teachers and projects continued after the period of implementation. The principal is less important for introducing teachers to new techniques; the project director can do that. But, the incorporation of such techniques takes place only if the principal encourages an atmosphere of collegiality and experimentation and participates personally in workshops and other such activities.[35]

If teachers sensed that a principal was indifferent to a project, even a skilled project director could not move them.[36] The more supportive the principal was seen to be by teachers, the higher the rate of implementation.[37] Project directors were essential in transmitting techniques but had no effect on continuation. This required the impetus for institutional change which only principals could supply.[38]

No demographic or other school characteristic, such as size, affected the implementation or continuation of projects.[39] However, change was harder to achieve in high schools. Fewer projects were adopted and continued. The subject matter approach of high school teachers seemed to be the obstacle. It conflicted with the kinds of comprehensive changes introduced at the elementary level which minimized the differences between disciplines.[40]

Participation in the planning process enhanced the commitment of teachers to new projects. Training workshops, the introduction of aides and specialist staff support to classrooms, observation of other classrooms and regular meetings gave teachers needed support and helped them overcome their aloneness. They were then willing to help.[41] It is perhaps surprising that complex and ambitious changes were more likely to be supported by teachers than simpler projects. No clear explanation is provided.[42]

Good working relationships among teachers depended upon "organizational climate" which seemed to consist of a highly favorable view of a school and a principal. These attitudes were strongly correlated with considerable cooperation among teachers. The new projects benefited from such attitudes, if they were present, and also strengthened them.[43]

Teachers were asked to match the leadership styles of their principals to four criteria and to rank the importance of each:

1. A principal treating teachers as equals was valued but not considered important for the effectiveness of principals.
2. Teachers strongly favored principals who were interested in them.
3. Principals who were instructional leaders were highly valued.
4. Principals who were primarily administrators were rated average or less.[44]

The old idea of a principal who runs a taut ship is less appealing, at least in the face of innovation. The same is true of the concept of a passive manager. The authors add:

> These data suggest that the effective principal combines an active role in shaping the school's instructional program with a a personal and supportive relationship to the staff.[45]

Elementary principals were given much higher marks on all four criteria than either junior high or secondary school principals.[46]

Experienced teachers were the least interested in change. The authors suggest that teachers get in a rut after three to five years, but wonder whether this is a fact of life or an organizational defect of schools and what they fail to do for professional development.[47]

Finally, the study strongly suggested that if innovations are to be implemented, they must be introduced in a practical way so that the teacher can make the new ideas work in the classroom and see the effects.[48]

Everett Pfanstiel anticipated the Berman-McLaughlin findings in a 1971 study of principals and teachers in 58 public and private schools in Kentucky. One hundred and twelve schools were ranked according to the degree of curricular change or stability exhibited. The top third was then categorized as changing and the bottom third as stable.[49] The attitudes of all principals and a sample of teachers were then compared on the dimensions contained in the following propositions about findings:

1. Schools characterized by change tend to be administered by principals who assume greater responsibility and authority and delegate more of this authority to teachers than do principals who administer stable schools.[50]

2. Changing schools have teachers who see themselves as having "progressive" attitudes toward education and who believe that there is a high degree of internal control of school matters. The schools with less change have teachers with more "traditional" philosophies who also see control as external to the school.[51]

3. When principals and teachers were considered together, there was a positive relationship between changing schools, principals with a high sense of responsibility, authority and delegation, and progressive teachers with a high sense of control. The reverse attitudes were found in the stable schools.[52]

4. Teachers in changing and stable schools differed respectively in their educational philosophies--progressive or traditional--even when their principals were much the same.[53]

The author implies that it is difficult for a progressive principal to turn a traditional group of teachers around but concludes that progressive teachers can set the climate for a school apart from the personality of the principal. There is no explanation of the possible role of previous leaders in nurturing such beliefs.

He also suggests that the failure of principals to assume authority and then delegate it to teachers may be the fault of the principal or could be the result of the refusal of teachers to accept such delegation.[54]

The strongest relationship was between principals with a strong sense of responsibility for their own actions and progressive teachers. This combination may create a dynamic collegiality.[55]

Despite the obstacle of traditional teachers, the author concludes that change will most likely occur in schools in which the principal has received or assumes responsibility for setting educational goals. He adds that superintendents should take note. First, get good principals. Second, if they are scarce, superintendents should encourage teachers to accept a sense of responsibility and the authority necessary to act on it.[56] He adds that in the absence of creative principals, the stimulus to teachers may have to be supplied by a source outside the school.[57]

However, he gives us no remedy for schools in which teachers refuse to change except to suggest that the education of teachers should include courses on how to test theories of learning experientially and how to participate in decision-making processes.[58]

The analysis of these four studies has now pushed us outside of the schools to the larger system. A number of questions must be asked:

1. Who will act to encourage principals to assume responsibility and how?

2. How can one help principals who have accepted responsibility but who face resistant teachers?

3. Who will help teachers assume greater responsibility for their work and how?

4. Do the administrators of school systems really wish principals and teachers to assume responsibility and be innovative?

5. What happens on issues on which there are deep policy disagreements if superintendents delegate these issues to principals? May not individual principals challenge official policy and thus damage the accountability of the school system to the community? Could the same thing happen if principals delegate policy issues to teachers?

6. Is change necessarily good and stability bad? Is "progressive" education always to be preferred to "traditional?"

Research into these questions has clearly been guided by a democratic belief in decentralization and a progressive philosophy of education which favors individuation in instruction. But empirical findings about relationships are independent of such values.

In any event, it is now time to ask what the literature has to say about characteristics of school systems in relation to the assumption of responsibility and change within schools.

School Systems and Schools

Berman and McLaughlin have followed up their earlier interest in the continuation of reform through case studies which describe processes of change more richly than survey materials.[59] They present three school systems as models of a maintenance system, a developing system, and a system which has institutionalized the continuing capacity for organizational change.

The maintenance system tolerates the kinds of schools described by Sarason and Wolcott. The ethos of the Midville school district is one in which people do their jobs without taking any risks. Positions and status are overriding considerations. As a result, the school system manifests regularity and uniform rules but schools vary greatly because no central pressures are exerted in behalf of performance. Uniformity is more symbolic than real. Schools are separated and there is limited communication up, down, or across the bureaucracy. Self-satisfied people guard the boundaries which protect them from others. Efforts at central change, which are few, are not resisted but are blunted through cooptation of new ideas by old routines. No one has the incentive to take risks.[60]

In this system, decentralization and isolation are companions. District officials seldom consider matters of school operation. Principals seldom enter classrooms; teachers are alone and like it that way.[61] Elaborate demands from the top for bureaucratic uniformity and efficiency seldom touch the act of teaching. Central administrators like the balance of bureaucratic uniformity with actual loose coupling because they appear to be in control. No challenges are raised from any quarter.[62]

The second school system, Lakeville, was changed from a maintenance to a developing system because a new superintendent knew what he wanted and acted accordingly, with the support of the school board.[63]

New money was raised by lobbying the state and applying for federal funds. The community was mobilized through advisory committees of businessmen and increased participation in school activities. Middle managers and principals were transferred to become change agents and the salaries of principals were tied to performance rather than grade. The system was decentralized with greater responsibility in budgeting, personnel and curriculum given to new area superintendents and principals. New central leaders were given specific assignments to stimulate activity throughout the system. Teachers were encouraged in their development through the creation of a center for continuous in-service training. Emphasis was placed on improving the quality of education through continuous staff development and experimentation in the classroom. Finally, alternative models of open, traditional and mixed schools were created to give parents and students a choice.

The result was the creation of an organizational climate of decentralized responsibility with accountability to the center for performance.

However, the superintendent left, the school board became divided, federal aid was reduced, and many teachers still resisted; the system became stalled once the momentum supplied by the superintendent was withdrawn.

The third system, Sandwood, is a community which has accomplished what Lakewood is seeking. The school department has learned how to examine and renew itself routinely. The patterns are the same as in Lakeville except that decentralized responsibility with accountability to the center is so widely shared that it is the new norm.

Central administrators prescribe no "best" educational practice. Principals and teachers are to decide this for themselves. Principals are expected to be active in attacking problems. For example, several were asked to develop solutions to the growing problem of vandalism in one area. They did so, acting as a group, and reduced the problem. Principals are removed from their jobs by the superintendent if they do not take responsibility for their schools.

Central program staffs assist schools in developing and carrying through innovations but new ideas are first discussed in councils of teachers, administrators, and parents. Acceptance must be won before ideas are tried.

All of these patterns reinforce each other. The authors report that despite great diversity of practice educational quality is uniformly high. Where diversity is valued, principals and teachers feel free to make a difference.

It must be remembered that these case studies were drawn from the larger survey of the response of school systems to curricular innovations. From the federal perspective, it was "put the money on the stump and run." Nothing was mandated; therefore, there was no demand for rules, regulations or uniformity. In addition, it is certainly the case that there is no one "best" curriculum. Such innovations are therefore congruent with the organizational changes celebrated by Berman and McLaughlin. Decentralization of educational initiatives appears to be in the best interest of everyone.

However, Berman and McLaughlin present the decentralized responsibility model as applicable and desirable for all problems and systems. But this does not cover the possibility that the model might break down in situations of political and policy conflict. Furthermore, a regulatory policy which requires compliance, and therefore some degree of uniformity, may prove difficult to implement in an atmosphere which fosters freedom.

P. L. 94-142 is a regulatory measure about which there may be political conflict but which also requires considerable uniformity of compliance. Students with handicaps must be identified and plans worked out for them. They must be with regular students whenever possible in buildings and classes. Variability from school to school is still an unresolved question in the implementation of the law. If political pressures for and against compliance mount up, school administrators may seek control of 94-142 decisions. For example, advocates for the handicapped and parents have legal standing to sue school systems on behalf of services. Teachers' unions may resist variability in practice from school to school if inequities for regular teachers result. The parents of regular children and their political representatives may create a backlash against the law.

On the other hand, P. L. 94-142 may be easier to implement, nationally and locally, than the kinds of curricular innovations studied by Berman and

McLaughlin. There are no obvious reasons why regular teachers should resist the task of identifying children with needs or why special education teachers would resist working with IEPs. The "mainstreaming" of children is a problem for regular teachers and does require the development of new patterns of communication between regular and special teachers. But if central administrators can provide the necessary money and extra staff help to sustain the regular teacher as she accepts handicapped children, much reluctance might be reduced. Total organizational change of the social systems of schools may not be as necessary to carry out 94-142 as are required to create the kinds of schools sought by Sarason, Wolcott, Berman, and McLaughlin.

These are empirical questions. But in either case, administrators outside the schools will be more important for the implementation of 94-142 than appeared to be the case with the programs studied by Berman and McLaughlin. We therefore turn to an analysis of the range of possible relationships between schools and external authorities.

Neal Gross expresses concern that school system administrators who manage educational change seldom have a valid theory of how to do it. They confuse adoption with implementation, fail to anticipate implementation problems so that counterstrategies might be developed and do not look beyond implementation to continuation.[64] Everything is ad hoc. He advances a "leadership-obstacle course" theory in which it is the responsibility of managers to ensure that the conditions necessary for implementation success are present. For example, resistance to proposed change must be overcome. Those who would implement must clearly understand what they are being asked to do. They must have the necessary skills and capabilities as well as the materials and equipment. Organizational arrangements which do not match the innovation must adapt to it. And those in the organization must be persuaded to give time and effort to the innovation. Only management can supply these conditions. One cannot simply hand an idea to teachers and tell them to do it.[65] Managers must self-consciously ask themselves questions like:

> Should teachers be involved in planning and if so, how? What types of feedback mechanisms will be needed? What procedures should be established to evaluate achievement?[66]

If this is not done and management improvises for each situation, the system will suffer. Gross believes local school administrators to be quite deficient in such leadership skills.

It is his view that the school is the optimal unit for change rather than the school district. Consensus on new goals is unlikely to be created throughout an organization so central administrators should rely on middle-level entrepreneurs to grasp the thistle. The belief in the school as the optimal unit of change requires the enhancement of planning in individual schools and must permit differentiation of school programs. There can be no "best" system for comprehensive change in all the schools of a district.[67] This begs a difficult question, also eluded by Berman and McLaughlin, of what the administrator does in the face of a shortage of entrepreneurs and how one deals with schools which are not innovative, particularly for programs which require change across the board.

James March enumerates the skills needed for such tasks and for general educational leadership in the future. These traits go beyond either specific educational or management competencies--to broad "political" skills which probably characterize effective leadership in most complex organizations:

1. Managing relations between experts and nonexpert to get the best from each.

2. Managing conflict through building political coalitions.

3. Managing goals by coping with their ambiguity and the lack of clear relation of means to ends by acting in the absence of clear objectives.

4. Managing time so that one rides the railroad rather than being ridden by it.

5. Managing inference from incomplete information.[68]

The conclusion is clear. School system administrators, including middle managers, cannot successfully impose directives on schools. They must develop the skills to lead through indirection. The key to effectiveness through indirection is understanding the school system and schools as political systems which must be managed to build coalitions of support. One appeals to the perspectives and incentives of those whom one would persuade and build support continuously across time because policy is never finished nor are decisions ever finally implemented.

The importance of this discussion for us is to ask, in the next four chapters, whether the exercise of such skills has been important for the implementation of 94-142 and whether they were present and exercised.

Higher Government, School Systems and Schools

To return to the question with which we began, how might federal and state regulatory and implementation strategies be designed to support these forces in local situations which promote responsiveness, assumption of responsibility and follow-through?

Berman and McLaughlin concluded that the efforts at educational innovation which they studied were not significantly affected by federal actions.[69] Differences in federal management of the several programs appeared to lack different effects. They criticize the federal approach to curricular innovation as reflecting the classical engineering research and development approach. A model is developed through research, tested in demonstrations and then disseminated to users who adopt it as if it were a piece of machinery.[70]

They conclude that federal change agent policies exercised little influence on local innovation because they did not influence the motivations of key local actors in the ways crucial for implementation so fully described in their studies. They do not conclude that there should not be a federal role, but that this role could be to formulate administrative guidelines which would call for and reward continuous, on-line planning, regular and frequent staff meetings, in-service training linked to staff meetings and local material development. These are the factors which the authors found most conducive to "mutual adaptation." They also suggest fellowships enabling teachers to work elsewhere, proposal formulation grants for planning and open evaluation schemes which provide continuing feedback rather than summary judgments.[71]

Lois-ellin Datta points out, in criticism of Berman and McLaughlin, that there was never any anticipation of a federal role of any kind in the programs they studied. Criticism of a top-down, classic, technological R & D strategy is an attack on a straw man.[72] She argues that the "change agent" study was actually an analysis of bottom-up, local planning and that the case for or against a strong federal role has yet to be made.

Paul Hill broadens the picture by analyzing the implementation of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, a law which was both regulatory and redistributive and which required a strong federal regulatory role and considerable organizational changes within school districts and schools in order to provide compensatory education for disadvantaged students.[73]

Hill argues that the implementation of Title I depends upon two management systems. The first, a centralized enforcement system, is formal and regulatory. It tells the states and localities what they must do in use of funds and staff in order to comply with the law. Compliance is subject to fiscal audits and management reviews. Federal funds can be withheld.

The second system consists of informal modes which extend and reinforce the formal rules and make it possible for them to work:

1. A network of state and local officials has developed whose careers depend upon the implementation of Title I. Their incentives make them advocates.

2. Non-fiscal sanctions can be invoked by federal officials against non-compliance. A state or city which is chosen for a public audit may be embarrassed and responsible officials more so.

3. National program evaluations that publicize the progress made by Title I students may stimulate parents and advocates to ensure continued progress.

4. Federal technical assistance is an opportunity to help in a way that goes beyond regulations.

5. Organizations of citizens who support Title I can complement federal monitoring by local watchdog efforts, assisted by lawyers and political representatives.

These five factors are all present in local situations and give bite to the formal regulatory system. Hill is certain that formal regulatory systems are necessary but not sufficient.

1. Congress will not permit federal agencies to withhold funds for noncompliance. The punishment is too severe for the crime and the intended beneficiaries suffer even more.[74]

2. The objectives of Title I can be stated in regulations but only as an invocation. Nothing is added about how to achieve them. For example, local planning for student needs is supposed to produce good instruction but that is not guaranteed.[75]

3. Federal knowledge of localities is limited by small numbers of staff and too little time to thoroughly examine even the localities selected for intensive oversight. Compliance with gross regulations can be assessed but federal officials can never know enough about an LEA to be assured that it is in full compliance.[76]

Informal pressure systems may be common to federal regulatory programs. For example, the parties in a dispute may raise the issue for federal officials.[77] But, in such programs, and in Title I, federal regulations are levers to be invoked by the informal system. Thus, state and local Title I officers, acting from personal incentives, can invoke federal rules about the use of funds to local officials.[78] Superintendents do not want to be singled out for an audit. That is sanction enough.

Hill concludes that the federal government is incapable of throwing its regulatory weight around in ways that critics have feared. Rather, the federal goal should be to develop incentives for state and local officials to act freely to carry out the program.[79]

Michael Kirst and Richard Jung add a longitudinal perspective to the implementation of Title I, and similar programs, by arguing that what appear to be small changes in the local operation of programs in the short-term often appear as quantum leaps through incremental improvement in the long run.[80]

They report federal successes in achieving the targeting of funds to disadvantaged children and local compliance with program design requirements through a combination of fifteen years of federal persistence and the emergence of coalitions of groups in behalf of corresponding interpretations of the law. The passage of ESEA and its initial implementation was initially dominated by professional education lobbies who wished ESEA to provide general funds to schools. But, subsequently, groups like the NAACP and others have tilted the balance of pressure in their favor and resolved the ambiguity about purpose which plagued early implementation.[81] Middle-level staff professionals in the office of education have stimulated the development of such constituencies at local levels and developed the kinds of informal alliances with professionals at the grass roots described by Hill.[82]

They see a clear, positive relationship between the increasingly effective implementation of Title I and the gradual emergence of evidence that children have been helped academically. And they take critics of the law to task for declaring that it has been an academic failure on the basis of short run evaluation findings.[83]

Unfortunately, this research on Title I has not reached into the schools themselves. We do not know how the regulatory strategies described by Hill, Kirst and Jung have affected district administrators, principals and teachers. We need the kinds of knowledge developed by Berman and McLaughlin in their studies in order to completely understand the implementation of Title I.

It is just as unfortunate that the rich research of Berman and McLaughlin was not conducted on a regulatory program so that external strategies could be linked to processes within schools. They come close to this in their study of three communities, an approach also used by Gross. But the federal and state hand is not seen.

These are the two research approaches which need to be joined. A case study of the implementation of P. L. 94-142 should permit us to bring together the theoretical loose ends which have been discussed in this chapter. The partial theories about federal efficacy, local leadership strategies and the responses of principals and teachers to new policy have either been based upon programs of a particular kind or of one piece of the intergovernmental chain. P. L. 94-142 is more complete:

1. A strong federal regulatory role is inherent requiring both formal and informal strategies.
2. The law is both regulatory and redistributive in its politics.
3. Considerable local organizational change will be required.

The conjunction of these three factors will make it possible to explore constructive and harmful links between federal and state implementation plans, local leadership strategies and the capacities of individual schools to respond to external demands. The primary focus of this study concentrates on the capacities of individual schools to respond to the dictates of P. L. 94-142 within the context of local leadership strategies in a single school system. The ability of federal and state governments to influence implementation is always an implicit topic of interest throughout the study, but much must be known about the local implementation setting before the question of the federal role can be seriously addressed. Following is a description of our effort to study one such local implementation setting in detail.

Research Design

The multitude of substantive questions raised by an examination of the character of 94-142 as policy and the nature of schools as the organizations to which the policy applies raised a number of research questions involving how to understand best the implementation of this policy in a single school system composed of three districts, some 90 elementary schools, 15 junior high schools, 17 senior high schools, and 7 special education schools. The complexity of the policy itself coupled with the ambiguous picture of schools as portrayed in the literature indicated that the study should give maximum reign to the broadest possible range of variables as potentially important influences on the implementation process.

In spite of the mixed picture of schools that is to be found in the literature, leadership remains a frequent and recurring theme that runs throughout considerations of organizational change. Since implementation of 94-142 clearly required at least a minimum degree of change in schools, leadership became an early central focus of this study.

It was clear from the outset that some understanding of the school system as a whole as well as knowledge of its major administrative components would be a necessary part of understanding the implementation of the law at the service delivery level, that of the individual school. The administrative chain of command extending from the superintendent of schools down through the districts and ultimately to the schools themselves was a natural beginning for an educational implementation study. The specialized, middle-management staff unit dealing with all special education services was likewise a clear-cut component to be examined. How did top level administrators view 94-142 in its potential impact on their school system? What changes did they see the law requiring? From where was the impetus for change to come? Who were the crucial actors for successful implementation? What obstacles to implementation did they foresee? How have decisions been made and authority exercised in this school system? This series of interviews provided a general framework within which to examine the actual process of implementation as seen from the school system as a whole.

While the need to come to terms with the overall organization of the school system and the perceptions of its administrative leadership was obvious, the best way to go about understanding the implementation process at the school building level was more problematic. The initial difficulty involved deciding which schools to study. One clear possibility was to survey as broadly as possible a large number of schools throughout the system at both the elementary and the secondary levels. That approach was quickly rejected because it was clear that the type of data to be produced by such an approach would lack sufficient depth to speak to any but the most superficial implementation questions. The building level component of the study would ideally capture the diversity among individual schools that exists in this or any school system, but at the same time would allow sufficient depth of understanding about particular schools to expose the likely factors influencing the implementation process in each school. It was clear that only a limited sample of schools could be studied if factors seeming to influence the implementation process were to be isolated and examined in some detail.

It is widely understood that elementary schools and secondary schools differ from each other in their clientele, their organizational structures, and their scales of operation. Convincing arguments can be made on both sides for beginning an implementation study of P. L. 94-142 at the elementary level or for beginning it at the secondary level. On the one hand, it can be argued that elementary schools have historically had more experience with special education programs and would therefore be likely to have fewer implementation problems than the secondary schools. To the extent that this is true, implementation problems at the secondary level would be clearer and more easily enumerated. On the other hand, secondary schools are larger and more populous and therefore, more difficult to explore fully with a view to isolating the factors seeming to influence the implementation process.

The study's clear prejudice in favor of examining the educational implementation process in some detail led quickly to a decision to begin in the elementary schools in the belief that some understanding of schools as organizational communities was a necessary prior context within which to explore the implementation process. Elementary schools seemed to offer the greater promise for isolating organizational variables and capturing organizational dynamics. Secondary schools, with their larger size and scope of operation, were to be examined in a subsequent phase of the study.

Of the 90 elementary schools in the system being studied, 23 schools had no special education program and were therefore eliminated from consideration in the decision about which schools to study, since only certain aspects of 94-142 would apply to them.

The study's focus on leadership as a possibly important variable affecting implementation of this law made it highly desirable that any sample of schools to be studied contain a variety of approaches to leadership on the the part of principals in those schools. Informants knowledgeable about principals and about individual schools throughout the school system were asked to characterize the leadership styles of all principals in the 67 elementary schools that contained special education programs. Former general school system administrators, permanent staff of the local teachers' association, and veteran teachers proved to be valuable sources of information about principals throughout the entire school system.

Initial conceptions of leadership styles suggested to informants as guidelines for categorizing principals were derived from the work of Lewis, Lippitt, and White as interpreted by Sidney Verba.[84] Three possible "ideal types" of principals served as points of departure for early classifications according to leadership style:

1. Democratic. Policies are developed through group discussion guided by the leader. Group members have latitude to show initiative in carrying out tasks.

2. Authoritarian. The leader determines policy and dictates steps for implementation so that discretion by group members is limited.

3. Laissez-faire. There is minimal leader participation in a process of individual and group decisions. The leader takes part only when asked.

Reported perceptions of leadership styles across informants were amazingly consistent, encouraging confidence that a variety of styles could be captured within a modest sample of schools.

The 67 candidate schools were then grouped by district in order to guarantee the opportunity to examine any effect that differences in leadership style at the district level might have on individual school performance. Informants consistently reported significant differences in leadership style in each of the three districts. The schools in each district were stratified according to the reported leadership style of the principals, and three schools, one from each leadership category, were randomly selected from each district for a total of nine sample schools.

These nine schools were by and large representative of the range of "typical" elementary schools in the system in terms of size, demographic mix, and general program. A number of schools not chosen by the sampling process stood out as atypical in one or more of their characteristics, and it was therefore decided to treat four of these schools as case-studies to be done in addition to the nine sample schools. The four case-study schools were subjected to precisely the same research procedures as the nine sample schools. They differed only in the method by which they were selected.

The four additional case-study schools included one very small school with a sizeable special education program. Another of the four was one of two elementary schools in the system housing a class for severely retarded students in a regular school setting. A third school was chosen because it was a middle school (grades 5-8) in a system largely divided into the traditional elementary (K-6), junior high (7-8), high school (9-12) organizational format. The fourth case-study was chosen because it had a significantly higher proportion of special education teachers on its faculty (48%) than any other regular school in the system.

The four case-study schools afforded the project some opportunity to assess the effects of size, organizational variation, and extraordinary special education program features on the implementation process and to get some sense of whether the process in atypical schools differed markedly from the process in the more nearly typical sample schools.

Thirteen Elementary Schools

The elementary school field work began with interviews of the principals in each of the 13 schools. Principals were asked a number of questions involving their perceptions of P. L. 94-142 and its implications for their schools; their views on the authority relationships in the school system as a whole and in their own districts. They were asked to describe how decisions were made in their own schools, and to describe how the special education program functioned in each school.

Questionnaires designed around similar themes (see Appendix) were sent to all teachers in each of the 13 schools. Particular emphasis was placed on determining the extent of interaction between regular teachers and special education teachers, since some cooperation between them would seem to be necessary if 94-142 were to be implemented. Of 387 questionnaires sent out, 267 were completed and returned for a response rate of 69%. More intensive personal interviews were conducted with all special education teachers in the

13 schools (47) and with a sample of regular teachers in each school (81) for a total of 128 personal teacher interviews.

The regular teacher sample was selected on the basis of certain patterns of responses to particular questions from the survey: How much effect will 94-142 have on your school? How easy will it be for your school to meet the requirements of 94-142? Do you think that handicapped children should be educated in a regular classroom setting? Do you find them easier, more difficult, or about the same to work with as regular teachers? Is 94-142 a good law?

Five basic response patterns emerged among teachers across the 13 schools. Philosophical positives were basically optimistic about the ease of implementation of the law, thought that 94-142 was a good law and that children should be educated in a regular classroom setting, but they reported little or no experience in working with special education. Behavioral positives shared the same philosophical views but indicated that they had frequently worked satisfactorily with the special education staff in their schools. Philosophical negatives were essentially pessimistic about the implementation of the law, were not favorable toward the law or mainstreaming, and had little or no experience working with special education staff. Behavioral negatives reported considerable experience in working with special education staff, but they had the same reservations about the law and about mainstreaming. There was a neutral or noncommittal response pattern as well.

The sample of teachers selected for interviews constituted a minimum of 25% of all regular teachers in each school and incorporated the full range of response patterns as well as at least one non-respondent to the survey questionnaire for each school.

The intensive personal interview schedule extended the logic of the survey questionnaire, but its open-ended character allowed for greater depth of information and much greater detail about the specific character of each school. Because a single individual was responsible for all personal interviews in each school, opportunities for accumulating a more comprehensive picture of each school as a whole were abundant, and investigators felt free to probe beyond the interview schedule in order to gain the fullest possible picture of every school in the study.

Additional interviews were conducted with psychologists for each school regarding the process whereby children are referred and evaluated for special education services, as well as other more general aspects of the school with which psychologists might have some familiarity. Because a single psychologist serves five or more schools simultaneously in the system being studied, they were in a position to have firsthand knowledge of a school and yet still maintain a certain outsider's detachment. They were also able to provide a certain comparative perspective on other schools and other principals not included in the sample and therefore contribute to a broader framework within which to understand more thoroughly the 13 schools in question.

Near the completion of the field work, principals were re-interviewed concerning their perceptions of the referral process in each of the schools, the extent of their own involvement in that process, and their understanding of the relationship of that process to the overall special education program in their schools.

The variety and number of interviews, with the survey questionnaire responses as a backdrop, provided the basis for a broad contextual understanding of the implementation of 94-142 in the 13 schools in question. The challenge of the ongoing analysis in this project, however, was to sort out the similarities and differences among these schools in order to isolate the independent variables appearing to affect the course of implementation of 94-142 in these schools, and at the same time assure comparability of analysis throughout the 13 schools in the study.

Three Additional Schools

The focus on leadership as an interesting and potentially important factor influencing the implementation of 94-142 prompted an effort to solicit definitions of a good principal from numerous administrators and other sources familiar with the school system studied. Central and district administrators involved in the actual selection and evaluation of principals were asked to describe the standards they apply in performing these tasks. Some respondents were able to enumerate a few attributes which they believed to be characteristic of the excellent principal, but by far the most common practice was to list those principals in the school system who qualified as outstanding principals. Although there were slight variations among the several lists suggested by respondents, there were a number of names that appeared repeatedly on virtually every list. The principals of at least two of the original 13 schools in the study appeared on one or more such lists. Nevertheless, the decision was made to add three schools whose principals were widely acclaimed as outstanding in order to put the leadership variable in sharper relief.

The three schools reputed to have outstanding principals were added after much of the field work in the 13 initial schools was completed, and they were subjected to the same set of research procedures that were employed in the original schools. The research objective in the three schools with reputedly exemplary principals was also the same as for the 13 original schools--to determine the degree of implementation of 94-142 and to isolate the factors seeming to influence the process of implementation in each school.

Criteria of Implementation

Before any analysis of factors influencing the implementation of 94-142 in 16 elementary schools could occur, it was necessary to specify what was to be meant by the implementation of 94-142. Clearly, the law and its companion regulations specify procedures that, when followed, constitute compliance. Some of those procedures are easily captured numerically, and others are captured in a stepwise sequence--do a, then b, then c, then d in order to comply. However, the law itself goes well beyond these easily detected prescriptions and requires that handicapped children be given education appropriate to their needs in a setting that is, to the fullest extent possible, like that of every other child. These requirements are not easily captured in summary fashion and they suggest that implementation of the law entails more than surface compliance.

Criteria and measures for the effective implementation of this law by schools are not obvious to even the most experienced eye once one goes beyond mechanical compliance. If a group engaged in field research finds it difficult to develop unambiguous criteria and measures, imagine the quandary of federal, state and local administrators who must enforce and monitor implementation.

The central provisions of the law set the terms for implementation:

1. Identify all handicapped children in a given jurisdiction who are in need of special educational services and develop and implement educational plans for them.

2. Place all handicapped children in the educational setting which provides "the least restrictive environment" that their handicap will permit. This is sometimes referred to as "mainstreaming" handicapped children by installing them in regular schools, perhaps even regular classrooms. However, many graduated combinations of the regular classrooms with special education alone, are possible.

3. Each handicapped child is to have an "Individualized Education Program" (IEP) prepared for him or her by a team of teachers and specialists in consultation with parents. This provision has legal teeth in that parents have the right to a hearing on the plan for their child and the recourse of legal action in case of dissatisfaction.

The study did not examine actions to move children from custodial institutions to special schools. Nor did it look at the five special education schools in the system being investigated. Interest was in the disposition of mentally and physically handicapped children in the regular schools.

These general provisions of the law provided only the first approximation of standards for assessing implementation. More specific standards of implementation tailored to the actual day-to-day operations of elementary schools in the system could only be developed after a general understanding of the system as a whole and of individual schools began to surface. The general criteria of implementation offered by the law might give reliable indication as to which school systems or which individual schools are in flagrant violation of the law, but more specific measures are needed if one believes that implementation is more than a yes or no compliance matter.

It is all the more important to develop standards of implementation that go beyond surface compliance if one is persuaded that different organizational contexts may be more or less receptive to and capable of making adjustments necessary for the implementation of an externally imposed mandate such as 94-142. Criteria of implementation must be both logically compatible with the probable intent of the mandate and at the same time specific enough to discriminate among otherwise similar contexts of implementation such as individual schools. Only then can the question of what variables seem to be operating upon the implementation process in organizations such as public schools be asked meaningfully.

The development of such criteria and their application to the body of data being collected in the 16 schools became an early orienting principle for the investigation. As a general but concrete overview of the school system being studied and its operation down to the level of the individual school came into focus, a set of relevant implementation criteria began to take shape. Before those criteria are explicated and applied, however, it is desirable to present the general overview of the school system in question.

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CHAPTER 3

The School System

> . . . We have so many things . . . that are weighing heavily on this school system . . . that are sort of "necessary evils". . . we've got difficulty with the community that is demanding quality education . . . . I think it is difficult for the leadership in this school system to have the time to sit down and say, "we will place this, this and this on our high priorities."

These are the words of the director of elementary education of one of the three school districts who cares deeply about the principles embodied in P. L. 94-142. But her thoughts are testimony to the difficulty of giving conscious and deliberate priority to any single goal in a complex bureaucratic system which is faced with diverse, and sometimes incompatible, external demands.

This is the first background factor which is necessary for an understanding of the implementation of 94-142. No one issue overshadowed it. Rather, a number of critical problems competed for time, attention, and resources, and 94-142 was one of these.

The second important background factor is the formal and informal system of authority in the school system. As this system is described, it will become apparent that form follows function. If much policy implementation is expressed in a delicate series of balancing acts, the same can be said of patterns of authority.

The school district is a system of 90 elementary, 15 junior high and 18 high schools. There are about 72,000 students and approximately 4,000 teachers. Thirty percent of the students are black. The system is organized into three separate school districts, each with a superintendent. The superintendent of schools and a school board appointed by the mayor set policy. The three superintendents administer the schools. The functions of the central office under the superintendent are to carry out professional development, technical assistance, personnel appointments, transportation and system-wide housekeeping, including financial management.

The department of special education is a staff office which reports to an assistant superintendent for program and staff development, who reports to the superintendent of schools. The department of special education hires all special education teachers and directs the placement of handicapped children in programs. The principal task of the five professionals, which includes the director of special education, is to oversee the conduct of the education of handicapped children. But the district superintendents possess actual line authority over the six special schools, which are attended by severely handicapped children, and the special teachers and students in regular schools. Table I depicts the formal organization.

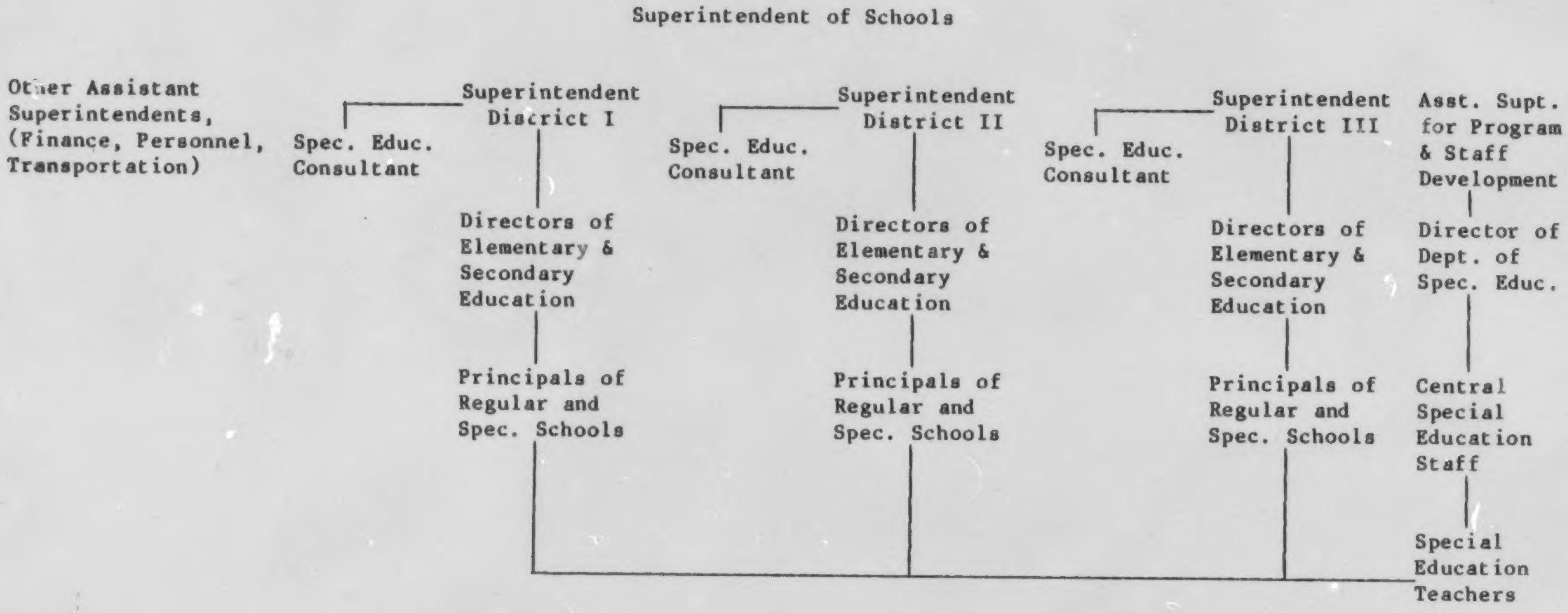
The divided, and yet shared, responsibility for handicapped children is the central theme of our story for it creates an ambiguity about responsibility which has consequences for the implementation of policy. Before we develop that theme, it is necessary to characterize the authority relations which influence the division of labor in regard to special education.

The superintendent of schools, who had been in office several years in 1980, and his predecessor, were both strong believers in decentralized administration. The previous superintendent had created the three-district system.

The broad pattern is centralization of general administration and technical assistance and decentralization of educational administration. Decisions about finance, logistics and staff are made in the central office.

TABLE I

Organization of the School District


Superintendent of Schools
Other Assistant Superintendents, (Finance, Personnel, Transportation)
Superintendent District I
Spec. Educ. Consultant
Directors of Elementary & Secondary Education
Principals of Regular and Spec. Schools
Superintendent District II
Spec. Educ. Consultant
Directors of Elementary & Secondary Education
Principals of Regular and Spec. Schools
Superintendent District III
Spec. Educ. Consultant
Directors of Elementary & Secondary Education
Principals of Regular and Spec. Schools
Asst. Supt. for Program & Staff Development
Director of Dept. of Spec. Educ.
Central Special Education Staff
Special Education Teachers

All specialists in curriculum and development, art, music, speech and hearing, and special education work out of the central office. The district superintendents are assisted by the directors of elementary and secondary education who work directly with principals. The aid of central office specialists for particular schools is invoked by the district administrators, often at the request of principals and teachers.

The structure reflects a generally shared belief that education takes place in the classroom in the relation between a teacher and a student. The purpose of administration is to support the teacher. The superintendent of schools sees an ideal system as one in which all educational decisions would be taken at the building level with the central office providing the technical assistance of specialists on request. However, he acknowledges the need for intermediate administrative structures because not all schools are equally capable of assuming responsibility. Principals must be accountable to someone and the central office is too remote. The result is a halfway system which is not fully decentralized.

Observers and participants share common perceptions of the merits and shortcomings of this administrative structure. There are basically three merits:

1. Central administrative capacities for oversight of school performance are enhanced by delegation of this responsibility to the three districts.

2. Principals are accountable for their performance on an annual basis to district elementary and secondary education directors who know them and whom they know.

3. The three district superintendents participate in policy decisions as members of the superintendent's cabinet, along with heads of functional services, and therefore, problems of policy implementation at the school level may be anticipated.

The shortcomings are embedded in the same structure:

1. The district offices need more specialists who can work directly with the elementary and secondary education directors to develop concerted strategies for the improvement of particular schools.

2. There are really three separate school systems. Three different sets of administrative directions may shape the implementation of policy in unanticipated ways. There are clear differences in administrative style among the districts.

The leaders of one district place a very high priority on their authority and control over school decisions. This does not mean that the superintendent and elementary and secondary directors do not rely on persuasion. However, they never let up. Principals are expected to be responsive to requests. Their district has large numbers of disadvantaged students; 45% are black. District officials believe that the problems faced by their schools require close central monitoring and assistance.

The second district is primarily an area of affluence, much of it white. Many schools are outside the desegregation court order because they are geographically remote. The superintendent is a relaxed administrator who believes in delegation of responsibility. This style matches the character of the community in which one finds many active parent groups with strong views about what their schools should be like.

The third presents a more mixed and puzzling picture. This district has the greatest demographic diversity of the three and the variety of school settings appears to engender more complicated, school specific administrative strategies than in either of the other districts.

The point of these characterizations for our purpose is that central office administrators, including those in special education, must say everything three times and adapt strategies of implementation to three different sets of actors, each with different administrative styles. Any task is complicated by such intervening structures.

3. Neither the central office nor the district assumes responsibility for the comparative evaluation of school performance according to general standards.

The central office provides technical assistance to schools, and the district provides leadership, but there is no system for the comparative evaluation of schools.

District elementary and secondary directors meet annually with each principal to assess how well that principal has achieved the performance plan agreed upon the previous year. The principals set the priorities in such plans and there is, therefore, no formal comparability across schools.

In 1978, a citizens task force presented a report to the board of education which contended that existing evaluation procedures for administrative, supervisory and teaching staffs did not provide effective measures of performance. A survey of teachers was cited which recorded that most would accept an evaluation system tied to performance. This was accompanied by a criticism of administrative paternalism which inhibited the growth of teachers and prevented their assuming more responsibility for their own self-improvement.

One might be skeptical about whether or not teachers are really thirsting for more responsibility and evaluation, but the absence of both is accepted as fact.

4. There is an absence of clear lines of responsibility and procedure for the implementation of programs.

The citizen task force pointed out that there were no accepted procedures for the dissemination of effective curricular programs throughout the system. No one seemed to accept responsibility for such leadership. The report continued on a more general level:

> Recognizing that no school system can meet a crisis easily in the face of conflicting public demands, there has been a clear-cut lack of planning in the anticipation of problems which will occur and an absence of clearly defined measures for dealing with problems which already exist.

Citizen groups often have very naive views about the possibilities for both planning and evaluation. Certainly, the report just quoted contains no awareness of the practical difficulties or even of the inherent limitations on planning in a bureaucracy. Our purpose is not to pass judgment but to describe a pattern. The task force report described the same situation which we found in our explorations.

The task force report recommended greater centralization of planning and evaluation and increased decentralization of instructional planning and implementation to local schools. It questioned whether the district offices should exist if strong leadership for instructional improvement could not be shown to be a clear result of their existence.

However, the report failed to come to grips with the reasons for the practical compromise represented by the districts. The superintendent of schools would have liked to have decentralized educational responsibility to individual schools with help from central specialists. But, many schools need supervision. That task cannot be efficiently performed in a central office. Even if the effort is made, responsibility must be divided and one has de facto division and delegation to an intermediate layer. Thus, one has the practical compromise of a system which is perhaps too heavy in the middle, but which achieves a balance between unity and delegation.

The effect of this balancing act appears to be a kind of stasis in which few initiatives are taken at any of the three administrative levels. The central office performs logistics and deals with major policy questions. The districts keep things running smoothly. The schools teach students.

The missing element is concerted strategic cooperation along either vertical or horizontal lines. The school system embodies the model of simultaneous tight and loose coupling set out by Weick and discussed in Chapter Two. Logistics and housekeeping are tightly coupled. Instruction is loosely coupled.

It is perhaps not apparent from this description that the districts do not run the schools by edict, but it is the case that the appearance of command is deceptive. Governance is by indirection. The superintendent of schools may promulgate a policy such as the statement that P. L. 94-142 is to be implemented. This responsibility is then explicitly delegated to the districts.

But command stops there. Some district administrators might wish to lead by edict but the limited resources available preclude it. The central office cannot provide all the help that is needed. The quality of principals and teachers varies greatly across schools. District administrators must, therefore, husband their efforts. Schools must be dealt with in terms of ad hoc remedies for their individual strengths and weaknesses. They cannot be remade overnight by order. A given principal may be weak in establishing authority with teachers so an experienced lead teacher is placed in the school. A school may require more special services for disadvantaged students than are available so district administrators must decide whether to rob Peter to pay Paul. Some principals and schools will be less eager than others to have special education classes and students and the districts will fear that to order the reluctant may do harm to the special students they are are forced to take.

The superintendent of schools was firm, "I do not mandate." The assistant superintendent for program and staff development, who was given the responsibility for the implementation of P. L. 94-142 by the superintendent, adds:

> We have . . . been reacting to crises . . .much of it has been centralized in its origin; the decentralization comes in implementation and it's a matter of our persuasive ability. Neither the director nor the district superintendent at this point are willing to just hand down an edict, whatever the topic.

The reference to crisis is a reminder of the continuing controversy about desegregation. The major policy issue which school administrators faced in the 1970s was the implementation of a busing plan for desegregation under the order of a federal court. During 1979-80, a plan to extend busing to parts of the district previously excluded was before the court. The externally imposed shocks to the system, such as the court order, have created an atmosphere of caution and control, but we would argue that these values are built into the fundamental organization which has been described.

This general characterization of the system of authority is a necessary background to an understanding of the relationships between the department of special education, the districts and the individual schools. General patterns are reproduced in the small:

1. The responsibility for the implementation of P. L. 94-142 is ambiguous in a situation of shared and yet divided authority.

The superintendent of schools holds the assistant superintendent for program and staff development and the department of special education, which reports to that superintendent, responsible for the implementation of the law. However, the district superintendents exercise line authority over the schools. Special education is a staff office. Each district has one special education consultant who arranges student staffings. District elementary and secondary directors treat the program as one among many important tasks; its does not have overriding priority with them.

Central office special education staff deals with schools on an ad hoc basis both in regard to monitoring compliance with the law and providing technical assistance. Five people cannot monitor 123 schools, nor can they provide all the technical assistance which is needed. The same staff must also oversee the six special education schools, deal with social service agencies which provide supported services for handicapped children and participate in due process hearings brought by parents and advocate groups.

The initiative for creating special classes in the regular schools lies with the department of special education. But decisions about provisions of space and the hiring of teachers is made by the general administration. Special education places students in specific classes after their needs have been determined, but the range of available programmatic opportunities is set by the resources of the school district and the decisions of the superintendent and the district superintendents.

2. The weakness of capacity for strategic planning in the system is reflected in the absence of a coherent system-wide strategy for the implementation of P. L. 94-142.

The director of special education has been given the ball to carry with the promise of very little help from others. They will not impede him. All are supportive, but no one takes a large measure of responsibility. Yet, the director lacks leverage and sanctions.

There is virtually no concerted cooperation among the top special education and district administrators on anything but specific problems in particular schools. They never sit down and plan a strategy of attack on the implementation problems of a range of schools or a district as a whole.

By the same token, there are divisions of turf within the specialist ranks. For example, the division of psychological services, which is responsible for testing and assessing all children thought to be handicapped, and the department of special education keep their distance from each other. This separateness is revealed in the role psychologists play in the schools, which will be explored in detail in later chapters.

3. As a consequence of this system of divided authority and ambiguous responsibility, individual schools have had great latitude for the implementation of 94-142. This means that some have done well and others not so well.

It could be argued that uneven accomplishment is to be expected in a large system with varying degrees of talent and commitment on the part of principals and teachers and quite diverse problems among schools as a result of student and community characteristics. This certainly is the case. Our point is that the system of fragmented authority has, to a great extent, permitted individual schools to develop their own responses to 94-142. Achievements have been internally generated and inaction internally rooted.

The remainder of the chapter will illustrate the preceding argument, but before we consider the system-wide dynamics of implementation, we should look at the past.

The History of Special Education in the District

The school system has been historically hospitable to special education. The superintendent of schools initiated the development of a strong program during the 1960s. The growing staff was drawn in large part from the nationally prestigious department of special education of a local college of education. Faculty members of this college have also been available for expert consultation.

The chief innovation of the special education division has been the resource room program. A special education teacher provides tutorial and small group instruction for both handicapped and gifted students in a resource room for a few hours each week. There are 58 such classes in the 90 elementary schools.

In recent years, there has been a policy of shifting mildly handicapped children from self-contained classes for the handicapped to regular classes with other support services. About 80% of learning disabled children are in regular elementary and secondary classrooms with support services. Most of the remaining 20% are in regular schools in special classes. About 70% of the educable mentally retarded are in special classes in regular elementary and secondary schools and most of the rest are in regular classes. Fifty-four percent of the deaf and hearing-impaired children were in regular classes in 1978-79. Ninety-three percent of the visually impaired are in regular classes with support services.

These figures indicate that almost all of the mildly handicapped children (LD and EMR) are in regular schools. The special schools are reserved for the moderately and severely handicapped. Physically handicapped children are placed in regular schools with greater or less difficulty depending upon the disability.

In 1972, the state legislature passed a statute similar to 94-142. Special educators believe that the chief administrators of the school system did not get serious about the state law until 94-142 was passed in 1975. They report that the word to implement state requirements was not passed down. The state provided no money until after a state court order to do so in 1974. The two laws are very similar--the state statute having been drawn from the same model statute written by the Council for Exceptional Children which was the basis for 94-142. But it was not until plans were set in motion to implement 94-142 by September, 1978 in response to federal regulations, that state law became a reality as well.

Strategies of Implementation

To set the following discussion in context, it is necessary to note the legal and financial constraints on the school system's efforts to implement the law in the regular schools. The statute places first priority on serving children who are receiving no education; the consent decree for implementing the state law also emphasizes the education of previously unserved children.[1] The effect of these stipulations has been that the special education department has spent an increasing share of its budget on severely handicapped children who had been institutionalized or otherwise excluded from public schools. In 1974, there were two special schools in the system for moderately and severely retarded children; by 1978, there were five such facilities, plus a school for children with severe multiple handicaps. The necessary priority on expansion of programs for the severely handicapped has placed limits on the amounts of money and staff time available for services for mildly handicapped children in regular schools and classrooms.

In the summer of 1978, the school department ran a number of workshops for principals and teachers on procedures for the implementation of 94-142. These were federally funded and conducted by central office special education staff. Greatest attention was given to procedural requirements, such as the Individualized Education Program and team staffing so that principals would know what they were expected to do. It was intended that all principals would participate over several summers and this has been the case.

The workshops were necessary first steps, but they had at least two limitations. It is necessary to know required procedures but such knowledge does not provide one with the strategies by which to put such procedures into effect. For example, parents must sign the staffing report about their children but their actual participation in and comprehension of the decision is more difficult to induce. These workshops provided little help on that dimension. Second, the discussions took place outside the schools. It would have been expensive to have conducted such serious discussions within schools with the participation of all teachers, but it would have been more effective in promoting mutual understanding across regular and special education lines and between principals and teachers.

In the end, the principals and a few teachers were left alone to carry the message back to their schools. There was general agreement among special education and district staffs that principals were not only the key to 94-142, but were the fashioners of school climate which would most greatly influence implementation. However, it was also acknowledged that the response of principals was idiosyncratic. The primary achievement of the workshops was to remove fear. For example, many principals were relieved to learn that not all handicapped children were to be immediately "mainstreamed" to regular classes. Once these fears were allayed, principals fell back upon their own attitudes, values, authority styles, and school situations.

The director of special education and his staff expended their energies in the first year on the procedural themes set by the workshops. They set up staffing procedures for each district whereby students would be assessed, placement recommended, and an IEP written. The IEPs were in most cases written by a special education teacher from the staffing report after the student had been placed in that teacher's class. Strictly speaking, the separation of the IEP from the staffing was not in compliance with the 94-142 regulation which dictated that a multidisciplinary team (M team) write the IEP. But when faced with the need to process approximately 2,200 staffings quickly, the M team recommendation was deemed sufficient for placement.

The central special education staff gave particular attention to the contents of IEPs. It was one item which the monitoring team from the state department of education watched closely, through sampling. All the prescribed items on the state checklist of matters the IEP should cover were required.

As we will see later, the state monitors looked with sharp eyes for any discrepancy between the M team's recommendation for placement and the actual class in which the individual child was placed. A large number of discrepancies would suggest that placements were being tailored to match available services rather than services being expanded to meet diagnosed needs.

State officials felt that there were a number of such discrepancies. The local special education staff would never acknowledge this in interviews. However, they provided indirect evidence that there was a problem. In the first place, a long waiting list for placement developed in the fall and was not eliminated until May. Second, there were continuous complaints from the district special education coordinators, who supervised the staffings, that placements often did not match recommendations. Actual placement decisions were made by the central office in terms of available services. Third, the central staff complained continually that the department of transportation was not responding sufficiently to the needs of special children who could not find bus routes to take them where they had been assigned. Many such children rode special rather than regular buses and, of course, it was impossible to have individualized busing plans.

These problems were resolved by two decisive actions in the spring and summer of 1979. The director of special education was ill and out of the office. The acting director resolved to bring things to a head. There was a waiting list of 320 children who had not yet been placed. He informed the assistant superintendent for program and staff development that all requests by parents and advocate groups for due process hearings would henceforth be forwarded immediately upon receipt to the superintendent of schools. He said that the only way to avoid the resulting conflict and turmoil was to permit him to hire ten additional special education teachers who would create new classes to eliminate the waiting list. The assistant superintendent got the point and persuaded the director to provide the teachers. The waiting list was eliminated.

The second decision was initiated by the acting director of special education in July. He recommended to the assistant superintendent that EMR and LD students throughout the system be collapsed into one category. The idea was to give one class for the mildly handicapped to as many schools as possible. This would permit more children to attend school in their home zone and reduce the necessity for special busing across town. Instead of attending the EMR class on another side of the city because none was available near home, a student would go to a comprehensive class closer to home.

This idea was first developed in a 1974 plan which special educators had prepared in response to passage of the state law. The ideal was individual education within a comprehensive classroom. Teachers would no longer be EMR or LD specialists but would be expected to develop plans for the needs of individual children.

The idea was not discussed widely throughout the school system. There were two strong advocates and some dissent within the special education department. The assistant superintendent accepted the idea easily because it promised relief from a number of pressures and the board of education evidently felt the same way. The recommendation was accepted by the board in July and implemented in September. A number of problems were reduced in one action. Transportation costs and complexities were reduced because many students could ride regular buses. The waiting list problem was eliminated. And, most important, the number of schools which assumed responsibility for special students was increased.

The advocates of the new plan were frank to say that neither school administrators nor the school board had been responsive to such arguments until it suddenly became clear that money would be saved. Nine hundred thousand dollars had been spent on special education transportation in 1979-80, and the new plan offered the hope of reducing that figure in the long run as increasing numbers of children attended their home schools.

The district superintendents were not involved in this policy decision but did participate in its implementation. They and their assistants worked with special educators to select the schools for new comprehensive classes. Implementation was eased by a reorganization which assigned three members of the central education staff to each of the three districts. They were to work with the directors of elementary and secondary education. Although it was not acknowledged explicitly, there was an explicit assumption that the districts would assume a greater responsibility for special education and for 94-142.

The emphasis of the first year upon establishing procedures for staffings, individual programs, and placements could not affect the forces which introduced children to that process nor the way in which they were treated once they were placed in a school and a class. It was still quite possible for too few or too many children to be referred for special education consideration. And it was still quite possible for regular schools to keep their special children quite separate from the others in self-contained classes. The reforms of the spring of 1979 were intended as handles for grappling with these more subtle questions. It was hoped that principals and teachers would not so quickly refer mildly handicapped children to special classes. If a school had a consolidated special class, plus a resource room program, it was expected that the education of mildly handicapped children would be handled by that school. Principals were seen as more receptive to students who lived in their zone. It was hoped that fewer children would be referred to special education as a means of getting them out of schools which had previously lacked services. And the hope was also expressed that more of the same children would be partially "mainstreamed" to regular classes as schools began to recognize their responsibility for such children.

Several of the leaders of special education firmly believed that the number of referrals was too high. The service rate was 14%, 2% over the 12% estimate of the percentage of handicapped children estimated by the Federal Bureau of Education for the Handicapped and allowed by the law for funding reimbursement. It was believed that regular teachers and schools had been referring too many children to self-contained classes, shuttling them across town, and failing to introduce them into the life of the schools they attended. There was no accepted explanation of why this might be the case. But special educators were not happy with the result.

In September, 1979, school opened with 73 elementary and secondary schools with the new consolidated classes compared to 51 schools with EMR and/or LD classes the previous year. The increase was accomplished both by the creation of new classes and by the dispersal of existing ones among more schools. Seventy-two schools had resource room programs, an increase of four over 1978-79. The proportion of schools with some special education component--EMR-LD class, resource room, or both--had increased from 77% to 88%. Almost all of the expansion took place in the elementary schools.

There were many problems of transition. Not all long distance transportation could be eliminated. Some schools never implemented the plan but continued their existing separation of LD and EMR classes. The greatest opposition was from special education teachers themselves who complained that they were being asked to perform tasks for which they had not been trained. LD teachers resented being saddled with EMR children and vice versa. In many cases, the new, consolidated classes were larger than the previously categorized groups, posing practical problems of dealing with a wider range of individual variations for the teacher. During the 1979-1980 year, the director of special education and his staff worked in an ad hoc manner with individual schools, principals and teachers to try to work out the bugs in the new model.

Not all of the special education staff regarded the reform as a step forward; a minority perceived it as a retrogression. The concern of those who argued against the change is that LD and EMR children are, in fact, different. Grouping them together means wiping out the special knowledge, developed in professional education over the years, about how to deal with children in each category.

This criticism relies upon the validity of specialized, categorical diagnosis and treatment. If these categories are too crude to use as a guide for plans for individual children, as reformers contend, then the practicability of the change rests upon the capacity of M teams to develop good plans and of special teachers to cope with such diversity. One may doubt whether or not schools, as bureaucratic organizations, can treat individual children in so individual a manner.

It was also argued that the collapsed categories were not only confusing for teachers but for parents. It was more difficult to explain a general category which lacked specific content to parents.

We cannot determine the merits of these competing viewpoints. One would have to analyze the actual effects of programs on the progress of children. Nor can we determine whether the 1979 reform was a "cover-up" for the failure of the school system to create the necessary number of special classes to cope with increased referrals. The number of special teachers increased by twenty from 1978 to 1980, but the need was enormous.

Implementation in the Second Year

Members of the central special education staff were trying to nudge the districts into an acknowledgment of their responsibilities for implementation. The department was in a weak position to force such a change since moral suasion was its chief resource. The director of special education faced the dilemma of all staff operations which wish to influence line operations but lack the authority to do so.. Decategorization and emphasis upon the home school was a clear statement to the districts--you and your schools are now responsible for these children!

The superintendent of one district affirmed in the strongest terms that his directors of elementary and secondary education were responsible for carrying out 94-142 and that the central special education staff would be called upon for technical assistance when needed. The director of elementary education argued that superintendents were the key people in the implementation of the law, adding, "All the rest of us take our cues from them." She also maintained that accomplishment was the result of direction from the top rather than participation alone.

The special education central office staff person for this district was perceived by district staff to be in harmony with this strong authoritative stance. He described the response of the elementary director to the initiative of the record year:

> . . .(She) said, "Okay, let's call every special ed. teacher and aide in our district together for a meeting." That's the first time anyone had ever called such a meeting. And what she did was to say this: "We're meeting here in the materials lab. Here is a laminating machine, here is a duplicator, here is paper, here are textbooks. These are yours as much as they are any teacher's in this district. How many of you have ever been in this office before?" (Three of them held up their hands.) "Okay, it says ' special ed., you are a part of the general education program.'"

In response to the question of what prompted this action on her part, he continued:

> They have begun to receive pressure from the parents. . .when special education programs arise. I think they are beginning to see that no longer are we going to be intimidated by these problems . . . . They also see the move which we initiated in the reorganization . . . as giving them a cleaner and clearer contact and it is just a good time to start fresh.

Both the elementary and secondary directors in this district had well-deserved reputations for authoritativeness. They understood their task to be to work with principals to get the law carried out. As one put it:

> Since we have more services at the local level, we have been able to cut way down on our referrals. Most children are being served in their own schools and that's been our goal for a long time.

However, neither was so naive as to see the situation as perfect. Nor did either believe that principals could be ordered to do anything.

The superintendent of a second district indicated to his special education representative that the problems of 94-142 were not the kinds of problems he needed or wanted that year. A number of his schools on the outer edge of the district were to be included within the new busing plan which the school board submitted to the court in the spring of 1980. Many of his constituents opposed this plan. He had no taste for further controversies.

In addition, he did not regard the implementation of 94-142 as primarily a district responsibility. This was a task for special education, working in the schools. The following comment was characteristic:

> Things usually work better when they come from the local level up. We should have had time for each school to develop a plan for 94-142 implementation.

However, this superintendent was a delegator and the elementary director to whom he delegated responsibility was a zealot for the law. Her goal was to have handicapped children in every building. She saw great obstacles in the district in the unwillingness of principals to take handicapped children and the reluctance of regular teachers to teach them. Special education had been treated as a separate entity even if classes were in regular buildings. That had been changing, but:

> Now nobody yet knows whether the special education department is still a staff or a line function . . . . I don't know how much authority I have to say how things will be in special education.

She did not wish to encroach upon the jurisdiction of the director of special education. Such caution is to be distinguished from a reluctance to assume responsibility.

In her view, it would take time before special teachers learned that they should work through a principal. In the past, they had turned directly to their department for help: "For so long, they were in special schools or down in the basement." Nor were any incentives available by means of which regular teachers might be induced to teach handicapped children:

> . . . This is one responsibility that is back in the regular teacher's classroom that they thought they were through with. You knew, when they screened a child out of there that was somebody else's responsibility, not theirs. We have some re-educating to do.

But, she concluded that the majority of her principals would be cooperative as long as change was gradual.

In fact, she began a general educational process and worked to correct particularly bad situations. The central office special education staff member assigned to the district described a meeting of elementary principals called by the elementary director:

> . . .These are working principals and they expressed fifty-five frustrations, complaints, and bitches about special ed. . . . I mainly sat there . . . when it was my turn to say something . . . I was able to point out that a lot of that was board policy and the first complaint was poor communication, and I said,"Now I can embarrass you; there's a stack this high right in front of us of communication since 1976 through your district office to principals which said, this is where we wanted it to be. . ." Probably half of the principals did not have those kinds of classes just two years ago and they're not going to read stuff that doesn't pertain. . .and then the elementary director and I pretty well said, "here are the areas where we

> might as well not try to attack the problem this year because it's depending on court order, it's depending on the conditions that none of us have any control over, but the majority of these things are operational problems which you can control if you will internalize. . .and take it over. . .(and now). . .their regular working groups month by month are really getting at it.

He also described how he and the elementary director worked together to persuade a reluctant principal to put LD and EMR children together. Previously, the school had received only EMR pupils. The partial mainstreaming of these children was also encouraged and this permitted temporary separation of LD and EMR children in the special class so that each group could be worked with intensively. Such mainstreaming was possible because the school had courses in homemaking and diversified arts. Eventually the fifth and sixth grade faculty members were permitted by the principal to reorganize on a team basis for student sharing. Their achievements were presented as a result of special education expertise, the pushing and prodding of the principal by the elementary director and program opportunities already present in the school.

There was no secondary school director in this district in 1979-80, and the general report was that it would have made little difference. The high school principals were not enthusiastic about 94-142 and their director had defended this position.

The superintendent never appears to have supported the spirit of the second year. For example, when a request for programmatic action would come to him from the director of special education, he would not give it to his elementary school director. Rather, he would pass the message along to the district consultant for special education. This person was responsible for conducting staffings and had no authority to implement policy. Eventually, the central office representative to the district would catch up with the message and work with the elementary director on it. But, the reluctance of the superintendent to use line authority for special education was a thorn.

The third district is the most difficult to characterize. The superintendent was certain that the department of special education had the responsibility for implementing 94-142:

> Our responsibility is helping to implement the program which would be designed . . . I look to the department of special education for the philosophical leadership and for designing a program that meets the needs of our youngsters and I see my role as helping them to get that job done.

He did not perceive difficulty in any of his schools, and when presented with a list of the schools in his district which were being studied, pronounced them all to be "excellent" even though they varied greatly in actual quality of educational effort.

Both the superintendent and the director of elementary education understood the requirements for the effective mainstreaming of mildly handicapped children. Principals must support such action, regular and special teachers must trust and help each other and the way must be carefully prepared through consultation. Both preferred having plans emerge from schools. Neither advocated nor practiced the more active positions seen in the other two districts.

The elementary director focused solely on mainstreaming and, unlike his counterparts, gave no attention to referrals or staffings. He let principals take the initiative and the primary resource on which he appeared to rely for implementation was the commitment and skill of principals. There was no discussion of deliberate overtures to weak principals as in the other two districts.

Nor was there any sign of collaboration with the central special education agent for the district. She was seen as busy in the schools and as useful to the district staff to alert them to impending emergencies. However, the elementary director did not feel that he could or should assume responsibility for the implementation of 94-142: "I don't have the expertise to know what is best for these special children."

The special education representative to the district reported minimal involvement with district staff. She appeared to be very much on her own as she worked with principals and teachers. There were no concerted strategies for implementation which joined line and staff. In fact, the principals of the four schools in the study with existing LD and EMR classes in the district reported that the categories were not merged in 1979-80. Neither the special education representative to the district nor the consultant in the district favored the innovation. In fact, both were adamant against it. The district special education consultant was the strongest and most vocal of the three district consultants. He was the only one to hold staffings in the schools rather than in district offices. Both he and the representative to the district believed that EMR and LD children were very different and that it was a great mistake to throw them together in common classes and ask teachers in one or the other specialty to teach both kinds of children.

It seems likely that district officials never explored the degree of actual implementation because they looked to their two special educators to lead rather than assuming that responsibility themselves. If they heard no complaints (and they would not, for the principals preferred the previous policy), they assumed that all was fine.

The district director for secondary schools relied primarily on their principals for implementation of the law. In contrast to the first district secondary director, he regarded high school principals as largely autonomous because of their capacity to develop supportive local constituencies. The first district director reported tight central direction of secondary policy. These differences illustrate the manner in which the organizational climates and cultures of the districts differed.

We have seen three distinct organizational cultures, each of which affected the implementation of 94-142 in its own way. These portraits help one understand the dilemma facing the department of special education. If the department were to attempt to control and direct implementation, the passive support of district officials would negate the effort. On the other hand, even if each district assumed responsibility for implementation and used the department as a resource, actual programs would vary according to district style and climate. It was very difficult to achieve a balance in which the districts and the department worked together to achieve strategic goals.

Strategic Perspectives

There were 15 people in school administration who were paid to concern themselves with strategies for implementing 94-142. The director and assistant superintendent of schools, eight district administrators and five central office special educators comprised the group.

All fifteen approached implementation questions with a common understanding of what schools are like and how one goes about changing them. They often used the same words and phrases. It would be difficult to separate ideology from perceptions of the situation in these beliefs:

1. The principal is the key to a "good school."

Innumerable statements could be compiled about the characteristics of a good principal and the consequences for the school, and they would all say the same thing. The following comments by a special educator are representative:

> A principal who handles his own problems is a principal who knows what's going on in his regular classroom situation, who deals with reading and special education and arithmetic and everything else in a positive way . . . . You cannot show me a principal who cares about the third grade kids. . .and he's working to have a good math program, and a good reading program, who will not also at the same time be working in special education.

A number of ideas are in this statement. The principal must be a leader, not a namby-pamby. Teachers want to be led. The principal must be educationally proficient. And finally, the principal must be committed to nurturing individuality in children, so that a good school will serve equally the handicapped and the gifted.

2. A "good school" has few walls.

This does not mean that it is an "open" school, but that the curriculum be fluid enough to open the doors of classrooms and bring teachers together. Without exception, it was believed that a principal who could engender security and trust would be able to create such openness. One knew it when one saw it, for example: "Oh, the same way you select a barber shop. There is a barber shop where you can get good conversation . . . ."

It was generally recognized that 94-142 could not be implemented unless regular teachers were prepared to keep or accept special students in their classes. The barriers between regular and special education would have to fall and special teachers would have to find ways to help regular teachers who agreed to mainstream children. The model for the entire system was the well-established resource room program in which children with learning difficulties were given special help by resource teachers but spent most of their time in the regular classroom.

Although resource room teachers were in special education, the program was not generally perceived to be a special program. Rather, it was seen as a resource for regular teachers. The ideal for 94-142 already existed in capsule form.

3. The school system works through the principal to achieve a "good school."

This is both a promising and a limiting prospect. It is promising because one gets results from the right kind of principal, limiting because there are too few of them.

A good principal can be left alone. District administrators, to whom principals are accountable, devise ways of helping the rest. One provides a vice-principal with complementary skills, or a team of specialists, or relies on a lead teacher, but most of all, one exhorts the principal to do better. No systematic strategy for shaping a school independently of the principal emerges. This can be discouraging as one special education staffer recalls:

> It has taken me a long, long while to know the numbers of principals that . . . I just don't even want to go out to that school because they don't want to cooperate when I go out there. They don't want the boat rocked at all.

4. Schools are too different to be usefully compared and judged by common standards for implementation or results.

Each school was seen as very much a unique configuration of leader, followers, and circumstances. It was not thought to be fair to compare schools by common standards of performance since their circumstances were so different.

As a result, it was assumed that individual schools were to be worked with in idiosyncratic terms. The right combination of resources--principal, teachers, and materials--would create a school climate which would produce a favorable outcome for children. Of course, none were so naive as to think that all schools could be "good schools." But all schools could be improved through ad hoc strategies cast in terms of the needs of particular schools.

The existence of these assumptions may help to explain why there were no district-wide strategic plans for implementation nor any systems for comparing and evaluating school performances on 94-142 procedures and compliance. Suffice it to say that there had been no discussion of studying the impact of the program upon children.

This is not said as criticism. The particularity of school characteristics and circumstances is a manifest fact. School administrators have limited time, energy and resources and can deal with only a few problems at a time. The tendency was to focus on emergencies, disputes and the worst cases. It is not clear what a scheme for systematic comparative evaluation of school performance would look like. Certainly, such a framework would not be self-activating. Gathering the information would require a research task of greater complexity than our own research efforts.

The difficulties of evaluation are compounded by a law which asks that every child be treated as an individual in a situation offering the maximum number of options. If this change is taken seriously, it becomes very difficult to judge the appropriateness of decisions regarding individuals without going into cases in detail. But considerable sampling of cases is required in order to discern larger patterns. And again, one faces limits of time and resources.

One thus saw a number of ad hoc implementation strategies which were not consciously related. Procedures for compliance, such as the use of IEPs, were put in place. Workshops were initiated to allay fears and promote understanding of compliance requirements. Much time was spent in placing individual children in good school situations. Principals and teachers were encouraged to try new approaches. Finally, the first steps toward a comprehensive plan for special education in every school were taken. That was something more than an ad hoc strategy but the implementation was necessarily ad hoc. A special education staff member describes a typical set of problems arising from the consolidatin of LD and EMR children in single classes:

> . . . We opened up at least two or three schools in one district last spring and then generated about six more this fall, almost about ten, I don't know what the figure was. But, they're all in varying degrees of disarray. You couldn't always get the aides in when you got the teachers. The numbers didn't work out as projected because most of our data is not that good. We thought there would be X number of kids and you projected X number of teachers. We either came way under or way over.

Finally, there was a tacit understanding that the secondary schools, particularly the high schools, would have to wait. Elementary school children were to receive priority. Special education had been historically closer to elementary than to high schools. Many handicapped children had been pushed out of school by eighth grade. There had never been an LD program in the high schools since learning disabilities were believed to be temporary conditions which would respond to treatment. Thus, most high schools had developed unsophisticated options in remedial reading and mathematics, laced with simple vocational education, for EMR students.

In short, grand schemes were not appropriate for any area of implementation.

A Bird's Eye View of The District

The state department of education is charged by federal law with monitoring the performance of local school systems on 94-142. This is done by periodic visits by state staff members in which teachers and principals are interviewed, IEPs are read and classrooms are visited. The SEA has a checklist of conditions to be met in an ideal program which is based on both federal and state law.

The SEA uses these monitoring guidelines as the test of compliance. If a prescribed procedure is not in place, this is a red flag for further inquiry. If the procedure is in place, nothing is asked about its quality. The monitoring gets at quality only on questions of compliance, not in regard to quality of services.

For example, one of the state monitoring guidelines reads:

> The evaluation by the LEA (of the child) is made by a multidisciplinary team or group of persons including at least one teacher or other specialist with knowledge in the area of suspected disability.

This particular rule was the entering wedge by means of which state inspectors discovered two examples of what they felt were widespread lapses in the district referral system.

They were extremely upset to find that resource room teachers were doing assessments and making staffing decisions by themselves about whether to place children in resource room programs. It was as if the program was an adjunct of regular education rather than one part of special education. In fact, this was the view throughout the district, in both regular and special education. Great pride was expressed that principals and teachers regarded the resource room teacher as a person who supplemented the work of the regular classroom teacher. This was seen as a pioneering "mainstreaming" program and it was the model behind the plan to place comprehensive classes in as many schools as possible. It was hoped that the teachers of those classes would have the same sharing relationship with regular teachers as that of resource room teachers.

From the state point of view, however, school atmosphere, relations among teachers, and decline of the barriers between regular and special education were beside the point. The schools were not in compliance with the law. Children in resource rooms were not receiving staffings in which a multidisciplinary team assessed their needs and prescribed a program. The resource room teachers were not even using a psychologist.

There were even more specific infractions from the SEA vantage point. Children placed in resource rooms had been labeled as having "learning problems," which was permissible under the state law, and when 94-142 went into effect without such a category, the special education department labeled them as LD without evaluating them. However, in response to criticism, the children have since been reevaluated. Another infraction was the failure to use M teams for the gifted. The state law called for services to the gifted beyond the work of the regular classroom and thus, according to one official, "They are handicapped and must be treated with the same procedures as handicapped children."

Special education administrators were steaming about this criticism because they believe so strongly in the integration of resource room programs with regular classes. They saw compliance demands as having the opposite effect from the intention of the law. As one put it:

> The resource room program was a mainstreaming program and the teachers didn't even realize it. Now in order to serve the same kids, we must follow the guidelines. We call it special education. We thereby tell parents the child is retarded. For a lot of kids in the mild range, to label them is the worst thing.

Practical constraints enter into the dispute in addition to these philosophical differences. The number of school psychologists (who are funded by the regular education budget) has been reduced at the same time that referrals for evaluations have increased. Large numbers of referrals are left unprocessed at the end of the school year. The head of the psychology division is aware that this creates another target for criticism by state and federal monitors. He explicitly used the threat of such sanctions for bureaucratic leverage against continued budget and staff reductions by writing a memorandum to his superiors requesting an increase in the number of psychologists.

The use of resource room teachers rather than psychologists to assess children is a tricky question. There is the possibility that they make mistakes and are not competent to evaluate children by themselves. They use achievement tests whereas psychologists use aptitude tests. However, there is a self-correcting aspect in that children who cannot make it in regular classes with resource room help are sent to self-contained special classes through staffings. In any event, state monitoring does not ask about effectiveness, only about procedures.

A second tension between the SEA and district was seen in the ambiguity about labeling and individuation. The federal law does not require that local school systems use the traditional labels to classify handicapped children. But state reporting rules require that the services to children be so characterized. Therefore, even though the system is on the way to a collapse of the LD and EMR groups, children must be reported as belonging to those categories for the school system to receive state money for them.

This discrepancy in outlook may help explain the perception of the SEA monitoring team that many special students had been placed inappropriately. This perception arose from the sampling of staffing recommendations for students in comparison with actual placements. The placement too often matched available space rather than the actual recommendation. Some of this discrepancy may have been due to different expectations of state and local staffs. State officials wished to maximize specialized services within the accepted categories of handicaps. When this led to the discovery of classes in which LD and EMR children had been brought together, the assessment was sure to be negative. The collapsed classes would not account for all the discrepancies between recommendations and placement because the problem extended beyond the relatively few collapsed classes in 1979-80. However, from the local viewpoint, the state insistence on thinking in terms of the old labels was shortsighted and failed to appreciate the step toward individuation of programs which the 1979 reforms were intended to achieve. The dislocations of transition, which the compliance review picked up, were thought to be temporary.

It appears to us that both points of view have merit, each can invoke the law for justification and neither can demonstrate that its strategy will bring greater benefit to children than the other.

Finally, state inspectors caught the district in lapses caused by the effort to set up routinized procedures for large numbers of children. It was discovered that, in many instances, psychologists were working alone on referrals rather than in cooperation with an M team. This matched our own findings, which will be reported in the next chapter. We also found that psychologists were extremely useful as gatekeepers who would return children who had been inappropriately referred back to their regular classroom. However, state officials were correct in their criticism that psychologists should not be judging the appropriateness of special education placement recommendation after the psychologist had determined that something of the kind was needed. According to the law, the M team should have been assembled for the initial decision. But, it is not hard to understand the difficulty of assembling full M teams to assess every child referred. The use of the psychologists for the first assessment was an understandable shortcut.

By the same token, SEA monitors were critical of the fact that IEPs were written by special education teachers in the actual placement location. This was not technically in compliance with regulations but district staff members argued that the IEPs were faithful to the staffing recommendations and that it was more efficient to have teachers write them than for a committee to do so. The SEA critics contended that many of the IEPs were of a lower quality-just perfunctory checklists--than should be expected of a good school system.

The problem of bureaucratic overload of staffing demands was clearly at work here. And, again, neither group was able to demonstrate that the procedures which they favored would have better consequences for children than the alternative.

As a consequence of all the ambiguities about criteria for compliance and the tension between concerns about compliance and the search for effectiveness, individual schools were not only confused about correct procedures, but also had great latitude to shape implementation in accordance with their own values and routines. We now turn to this subject.

Footnotes

[1] P. L. 94-142, Section 601 (b)(4).

CHAPTER 4

Elementary Schools

The requirements imposed upon local school systems by P. L. 94-142 were apparent in the law itself, but the actuality of implementation depended on the day-to-day operation of individual schools.

In order to assess implementation in individual schools, with the object of tracing factors that enhance or impede it, it was necessary to develop criteria of implementation sensitive enough to allow detection of any important differences among individual schools. The law's requirements suggested the categories of activity to study in the schools, but the performance which constitutes implementation could be seen only in the schools themselves. An examination of the 16 elementary schools, guided by the general requirements of the law, laid the groundwork necessary for the development of criteria that would delineate differences in implementation based upon aspects of the implementation process as it appeared in all 16 schools.

Overviews of each of the schools helped us to isolate that behavior that embodies the implementation process in the schools. The law was then used to give values to the range of behaviors actually found in the schools, thereby providing criteria of implementation which could be used to sort out the schools according to their overall performance in implementing P. L. 94-142. Once performance differences were captured, it was possible to ask what factors contributed to those differences.

It is difficult to visit a handful of elementary schools without being struck by the differences among them. Some of the differences are immediately perceived. There are the quiet, orderly schools and the tumultuous schools; the bright, gaily decorated schools and the dim, somber schools; there are the schools that visibly encourage visitors and those that are somewhat intimidating to outsiders. These differences in surface characteristics are invariably accompanied by a disparity in deeper characteristics, including social patterns, authority relationships, philosophies of education, program structures, teaching styles, populations served and many more. Because this range of characteristics can combine into a virtually unlimited number of specific constellations, it is easy to conclude that there is no meaningful way that schools can be compared on the basis of a set standard.

An implementation study focuses not on the total culture of a school per se, but only on aspects of that total culture which are vital to the implementation of a particular program, aspects which cannot be totally divorced from the larger culture of which they are a part. However, some effort must be made to draw those salient aspects into the foreground of a school's portrait, while keeping the larger cultural matrix in sharp background focus.

Isolating the Implementation Process in the Schools

The 16 schools were examined in considerable depth. From the broad array of data on each school, it was possible to sort out those behaviors that comprised the implementation process as it operated at the level of individual schools.

We found that teachers in all of the schools were finding children whom they referred for special education services. Established procedures for processing referrals and coming to decisions about the special education needs of children existed in every school. Opportunities for mainstreaming existed in every school, at least hypothetically. For all schools there was the possibility of adjusting existing programs and services to accommodate children with extra needs through the regular program without ever removing them from the mainstream. In schools with self-contained special education classes, there was the possibility of mainstreaming special education students socially and/or academically.

These behaviors, when taken together, constituted the implementation process in individual schools in its most concrete and visible form; and although they were found in all schools, they clearly did not always look the same in detail.

In order to move on to the question of the correlates of implementation in individual schools, it was necessary to assess the "degrees" of implementation among schools. The following analysis incorporates provisions of the law and the logic of implementation of that law that they embody in order to give values to the range of behavior actually found in the schools. The values for the component behaviors that best capture the implementation process at the school building level then become a summary dependent variable--performance in implementing P. L. 94-142.

Criteria and Measures of Implementation for Individual Schools

Using 94-142 as the point of departure, the guiding logic of the research led to a formulation of the dependent variable, i.e., a search for definitions and measures of implementation which could ultimately be matched to school characteristics as independent variables.

1. Child Find

In ordinary schools, the place for identifying children with handicaps is the regular classroom. The process of "referral" identifies candidates for help. Referral may be initiated by teachers, parents, principals, or an outside agency. A psychological diagnosis then determines whether there should be a "staffing" in which a professional team meets with the parents to develop an appropriate placement for the child.

There are five possible outcomes from a referral:

a. Return of the child to the classroom with the conclusion that the referral was inappropriate.

b. Return of the child to the classroom with a diagnosis to help the teacher serve the child.

c. Return of the child to the classroom with the assignment of special help, perhaps from a resource teacher or some other specialist.

d. Assignment of the child to a special education class in that or another school.

e. Return of the child to the regular classroom with no special help, when the child needs help.

All of the options except (e) are compatible with the law, which asks that handicapped children receive the services they need. However, it is not obvious which of the first four choices is best for any given child or succession of children.

A school which refers a large number of children for testing may be seeking to get rid of them because they are handicapped, or, the teachers may be very alert to the needs of children. One cannot determine which is the case from referral rates alone. Such figures must be interpreted by knowledge of particular schools. For example, one school with a very low referral rate might appear from the figures to be disregarding the law but a close look reveals that special educators and other supportive staff are working with children who have problems without a formal referral and staffing process. They never leave the mainstream. Ranking by scoring would be misleading. The principal in question may so resist the idea of stigmatizing through labeling that referring is discouraged and diagnoses are informal.

The referral rates of the 16 schools in this study usually corresponded with knowledge about the schools derived from interviews. All teachers were surveyed. A sample of regular and special teachers in each school were interviewed personally. All principals were interviewed at least twice. External views of each school were derived from directors of elementary education for each of the three districts, superintendents, school psychologists, central and district special education staffs, and representatives of advocate groups. This allowed referral rates for each school to be viewed from the broadest possible perspective.

The referral level of a school is defined as the percentage of the total school population recommended for psychological or other diagnostic evaluation in a given academic year. Since the law establishes no standard for gauging a reasonable referral rate, a standard based upon the median referral rate for the 16 schools was developed.

The median referral level for the 16 schools is 5.2% of the total population of the school. This figure is almost identical to the average referral rate for all elementary schools in the total system.* In weighing the actual child find patterns in schools, all of the schools whose referral levels come very close to this average figure are given two points for appropriate child find. Two schools are substantially below the 5.2% figure, but because they keep and serve many special children in regular classes without referrals, they are given the high score. These two schools that deviate from the pattern were chosen because they are atypical in their approach to serving handicapped children and are therefore not treated as a part of the random sample. This is the single case in which interpretive data were allowed to override the abstract measure.

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*It is not known whether this single system average is typical of other systems. However, the system under study does provide special education services to 14% of its school age population, 2% above what BEH has suggested is the likely level of need nationally.

Two schools have referral levels which are midway between our median level (5.2%) and our highest level (11%) and are given scores of 1 because of the high but not absurdly high referral levels. Qualitative information on both of these schools suggests that some over-referral is indicated in some cases.

The four schools whose referral rates are markedly higher than the median are givn scores of zero, because over-referral is strongly indicated from qualitative information.

It would be a mistake for a school administrator to use the 5.2 median figure as the sole basis for judgment about school performance without further personal knowledge. It would also be a mistake to impose a 5.2 requirement on all schools without further knowledge of particular situation. A suspicious figure should simply be a warning sign to investigate.

2. Least Restrictive Environment

The law does not require the placement of handicapped children in regular classrooms. Such "mainstreaming" is the final step in a series of legitimate moves--for example, a move from an institution to a special school and from a special to a self-contained special class in a regular school.

The ambiguity of "mainstreaming" is confusing. Children are to be referred out of regular classes, when necessary, but also moved in, when possible. Judgments about the appropriateness of such actions in any school are difficult. The law clearly encourages the placement of the maximum possible number of children in regular classes even if some part of their day is spent in special education classes. But how is one to know the "optimal" number of possibilities in a given school? These are professional judgments and such judgments vary widely among teachers and principals. One could ideally match schools with similar student populations to compare levels of mainstreaming, but no two schools are exactly comparable in that regard.

One can look at the regular movement of children from self-contained to regular classes within a given school. A low level may reveal a reluctance to mainstream and a high level may indicate enthusiasm, but many records will be mixed and unclear, especially with such small numbers.

Interviews told us a great deal about interest in and willingness to mainstream handicapped children within each school. This was the primary basis for the ranking judgments. For example, two very similar schools with long histories of high academic standards have changed markedly in the demographic characteristics of the students since busing began. Slightly less than half of the students in each school are minority children. One school staffs a relatively high proportion of its students, and its special education classes are largely self-contained. The other school staffs relatively few students, and many of those in the special education classes are mainstreamed for part of the day.

The quantitative measures developed as indices for LRE (Least Restrictive Environment) are roughly congruent with such observations. There are two measures. All 16 schools were compared on staffing levels. Then, the five schools with only resource rooms and no self-contained classes were dropped and the remaining 11 were compared on the numbers of children who were mainstreamed. The first score is assigned on the basis of the staffing level for each school, defined as the percentage of total population staffed to self-contained special education classes in or out of the school. The higher the level of such staffings, the less likelihood that the school is making an effort to serve children with problems in regular classes before resorting to self-contained special education placement.[1] Use of regular classrooms with support services to serve children is one variety of LRE as described by 94-142.*

The median staffing level for the 16 schools is 2.2%. All schools below that level or near that level are assigned a score of 2 on this measure, with the exception of one school in which there is evidence that children are being kept in the mainstream without appropriate support services. The failure to provide needed services is as much a violation of LRE as the overprovision of self-contained services.

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*A staffing or multidisciplinary (M) team meeting does not necessarily result in a full-time special education placement for a child. In this system, however, the dominant practice at the time of the study was to provide resource room and other part-time services without a formal staffing. Screening and parental participation requirements were fulfilled by resource teachers and principals without involving district and central office special education staff. This practice has subsequently been judged by the State Education Agency to be in violation of the requirements of 94-142, and formal staffings are now required for resource room services as well as full-time placements. We felt that the overwhelming evidence of this practice during the course of this study justified our presumption that a formal staffing was tantamount to placement in a special education class.

As in the case of measure #1, two schools are about midway between the median level and the highest level (5.5%), and are therefore assigned a score of one. Three schools are given a score of zero because of their markedly high staffing levels.

The second LRE score is applied only to those schools housing self-contained special education classes. This score is given on the basis of reported degrees of mainstreaming from special education classes in each school, defined as the number of children who go out of the self-contained class into the mainstream for some part of the school day. (Reports of mainstreaming for PE and lunch are not included as a basis for this score, since all teachers of self-contained classes report mainstreaming for PE and lunch except some of those at one school.) Schools in which high numbers of the total self-contained special education population were reported to be mainstreamed for some part of the day received a score of two on this item. Schools who reported some mainstreaming, but less than might be expected (given everything else we learned about them), were given a score of one. Schools in which no appreciable mainstreaming was reported received a score of zero. This mark was also justified by other knowledge about how the school functioned.

3. Quality of the Process of Individual Placements

If a psychologist judges that a child needs special help, the question is presented to a multidisciplinary (M) team which consists of the district special education consultant, the psychologist, regular and special teachers or the principal from the child's school, and the child's parents. A conclusion is developed about the appropriate services to be given the child. Because all staffings are the responsibility of the districts, it is only that part of the process which takes place within individual schools--that is, everything up to and including the decision to go to a staffing--that can be used to compare individual schools.

The comparative analysis of our schools suggested four analytic components which could be used to define the referral-evaluation process and to assess the general quality of this portion of the total implementation process from school to school. These components reflect the general process standards that are implied by 94-142. The components are: (1) a high number of participants in the in-school process, (2) a high degree of communication among participants in the process, (3) multiple opportunities for parents to participate in the process, and (4) a clear-cut search for service options within the school before a staffing is considered. The first three components are highly correlated but do not in fact collapse in every case. They are therefore maintained as separate components in order to give maximum range to the empirical variations among our schools.

Some elaboration of the meanings of the four components is desirable. The first, a high number of participants in the process, suggests that the greatest amount of available data on a child is being brought to bear upon the process leading to a decision about whether or not this child should receive self-contained services. In schools where a high number of participants are indicated, school personnel other than the referring teacher, the principal, and the psychologist, such as a resource room or other special education teacher, are usually included in the process. Parents are likely to be used as a source of information about the child, not just as the grantors of permission for the process to take place.

The second component is related to the first, but is nevertheless distinct: a high degree of communication among participants in the process. This is indicated when the evidence suggests that participants in the process are engaged in a dialogue, characterized by a reciprocal pattern of communication rather than a sequential pattern in which the various participants appear to have their say at distinct points in the process and then drop out altogether.

The law requires that parental permission be given before a child undergoes evaluation. Parents must also be informed of the evaluation results and be given an opportunity to participate in the staffing, should one be required. These minimal points of parental participation are insufficient to receive a high score on the multiple opportunities for parental participation component of this measure. Only those schools in which the evidence suggests that parents are substantially involved in the process at points before a final decision is reached receive credit for this item.

The fourth component, a clear-cut search for service options within the school, is important because some schools are much more inclined to search for service options within the school before considering a self-contained placement for a child. Objectively, some of our schools have considerably more resources and service options than other schools, but the easy availability of program options does not control performance on this item. Several schools, regardless of the resources they have, clearly pursue available options before separation of the child is considered. Only schools in which the search for service options was seen as a part of the referral process by major participants in the process received credit for this component.

The point immediately preceding a formal referral is designated as the beginning of the process because a pre-referral search for service options and pre-referral screening are quite visible in some schools. The process ends when a final decision is made about whether or not a child should go to a staffing for a self-contained placement. After that point, the districts handle the process until a staffing decision is formally proposed. Once the staffing decision is final, the central system completes the process by assigning a placement purportedly based upon the staffing recommendation. Although the law requires that the M team develop the Individual Education Program (IEP) for a child at the staffing, IEPs in this system are written by the receiving teacher after the child is placed. Because of right-to-privacy guarantees in P. L. 94-142 and other complexities, the IEP component of the law was not examined in this study.

The bases upon which scores reflecting the quality of this process at the school level were determined derived from a comparative analysis of interviews with school psychologists, principals, resource teachers and regular and special teachers.

The schools ranking high on all components of this measure receive a score of two. Those schools ranking high on only one or two of these components are given a score of one. Those schools ranking low on all of these components are given a score of zero.

These criteria are neither mutually exclusive nor exhaustive. Clearly, they do not capture all possible components of a process by which to implement P. L. 94-142 in individual schools. However, since no specific criteria exist in explicit form either in the law or in research to date, it was necessary to develop criteria for assessing implementation performance in order to carry out this research.

Table I ranks the 16 schools according to our criteria and judgments. The numerical rankings reflect both quantitative data and qualitative judgments with the latter controlling when discrepancies occurred.

TABLE 1

94-142 Performance, 1978-79

PERFORMANCE		CHILD FIND	LRE-1	LRE-2	PROCESS	TOTAL
High	A*	2	2	-	2	6
	B*+	2	2	-	2	6
	C*	2	2	-	2	6
	D[a]	2	2	2	2	8
	E+	2	2	2	2	8
	F[b]	2	2	1	2	7
	G+	2	2	2	2	8
Middle	H*	2	1	-	1	4
	I*	1	1	-	1	3
	J	2	2	0	1	5
	K	1	1	1	1	4
	L	2	0	0	1	3
Low	M	0	0	1	1	2
	N	0	0	2	0	2
	O[c]	0	2	0	0	2
	P[d]	0	0	1	1	2

*Highest possible total score is 6, since lack of special education classes makes LRE-2 inapplicable.

+These schools were selected for study because they are widely regarded as good schools with outstanding principals. Two of the three schools are viewed as having atypical approaches to serving handicapped children (schools E and G). For these reasons, it is highly likely that high performers are over-represented in this sample as compared to their actual proportion of the population of schools in the system.

[a] Chosen because it is a middle school. Most schools in the system follow the traditional elementary, junior high, high school pattern.

[b] Chosen because it houses one of two classes in the public school system for the trainable mentally retarded in a regular elementary school. All other TMR classes are housed in special schools.

[c] Chosen because almost half of the school's population is handicapped.

[d] Chosen because it is a very small school as compared to most other elementary schools in the system. It also has a sizable special education population.

TABLE 2

94-142 Performance and School Characteristics

High Performance	SES*	Pct. Black	Court Ordered Desg.	Achievement**	Regular Student Enrollment***
A	low	62.6	yes	below avg.	800
B	middle	7.5	no	avg.	500
C	middle	8.5	no	avg.	400
D	mixed	21.9	yes	not avail.	600
E	mixed	32.2	yes	above avg.	300
F	mixed	46.7	yes	above avg.	200
G	mixed	42.5	yes	mixed**	300
Middle Performance					
H	middle	5.7	no	above avg.	700
I	mixed	29.3	yes	above avg.	500
J	mixed	34.5	yes	avg.	400
K	low	18.2	yes	below avg.	300
L	low	33.6	yes	below avg.	300
Low Performance					
M	low	41.7	yes	below avg.	300
N	low	48.5	yes	avg.	200
O	middle	0.4	no	above avg.	200
P	mixed	42.5	yes	above avg.	100

*"Mixed" SES indicates a marked difference in SES between the school's neighborhood zone and its bused-in zone.

**School's Fall 1978 standardized achievement test scores compared to scores for all schools.

***Rounded off to the nearest hundred.

Table 2 analyzes the schools, in rank order, according to the percentage of black students, academic achievement scores and pupil population. None of these factors seem to be important across the board for the implementation of 94-142. This leads us to ask about the importance of institutional variables in accounting for differences in performance.

When criteria for the implementation of 94-142 were applied to the 16 highly individual schools explored in this study, the above three performance groupings resulted. However, criteria of implementation are abstractions and schools are complex realities. In order to differentiate among those realities in ways that are interesting for social scientific analysis, it is necessary to develop and apply abstract criteria to real life settings; but the concrete realities should be retained and apreciated in conjunction with the more analytic perspective.

Some description of the overall flavor of the settings to which these criteria were applied may help to supply an element of "schoolness" that is quickly disguised by a categorization scheme.

Overviews of Sixteen Schools

School A, a very large inner city school, is habituated to serving children in ways that go beyond standard educational services. Because of its seriously economically deprived population, it has had the opportunity to participate in a number of special programs and has taken advantage of those opportunities. It serves hot breakfast to the vast majority of its 800-plus students, with the school's teachers supplying the labor for this activity. It runs a foster grandparents program which brings the elderly of the community into contact with the youth of the community, apparently to the benefit of both groups. Title I academic support programs are numerous and actively employed.

The principal of this school believes that community-based service centers are highly desirable and would like to see schools serve as the focal point for such centers. This philosophical commitment is clearly embodied in this principal's school, and the excess administrative burden placed on the principal as a result of this enlarged sphere of activity has not affected that commitment. Special education in this school appears to be just another willingly offered service. "What can we do for this child?" seems to be the first question associated with the referral process in its various stages. Both the principal and the school psychologist gave the search for service options equal standing with the legally required referral procedures.

The low number of children sent away from the school for self-contained special education services would indicate that emphasis on this aspect of the process is substantially more than rhetorical. Children in apparent need of extra services are found and referred for evaluation, but most are given those services in the school, often without resort to formal evaluation. School personnel provide parents with transportation to school conferences about the child if it is necessary in order to guarantee parental participation. If the mainstreamed services do not meet the child's needs, a more restricted environment can always be considered. The psychologist reports that reconsideration is not often necessary.

School B is a school that prides itself on being at the forefront of educational development, and P. L. 94-142 has been received in the school with much the same spirit. This school seems always to be in the vanguard of new curricular and programming experiments. The principal is usually adept at getting what is desired from the higher levels of the school system and is able to bring this talent into the service of children with special needs.

Very few children are sent away from this school for special education services, because most of those children needing extra services are given those services in the mainstream of their home school. School B's resource room teacher is fully integrated into the total faculty and is an important element in the search for in-school options for children with special needs.

The principal of school B is convinced that parental participation involving services for children with special needs is more than a nicety. The principal is so persuaded that parental participation is necessary for the child's well-being that recalcitrant parents have been threatened with suspension of the child from school until the parents agree to discuss the child's needs. This extreme measure has been resorted to only twice, but the principal finds it very effective in producing the desired results and feels obliged to use it when the well-being of a child appears to be at stake.

School C is a happy school, inside and out. It is always festively decorated and is characterized by a quiet hum of activity. Its principal is a person of enormous energy, and much of that energy is devoted to making the school a happy environment for all. Parents can be seen coming and going from this school with regularity and ease. It projects an unusually hospitable openness to the visitor, be he parent or researcher. This school seems to orchestrate an almost unending array of extra-curricular events such as career days and international festivals that bring the community into the school several times in the course of a school year.

This happy openness is undergirded by a serious, highly professional commitment to education. The faculty is striking in its self-confidence as capable teachers with grave responsibility for serving the community's children. Their sense of self-sufficiency and self-directedness was captured by their inordinately uniform response to survey questionnaire items concerning the extent of district level, school system level, state, and federal influence on the individual school. Most school faculties felt that the extent of influence at these levels was about what it should be. Teachers at school C dramatically expressed the view that there was far too much influence from these levels on the individual school. The special education resource room teacher in school C, when asked if she had much interaction with other teachers in the school responded,

> The teachers will stop me in the hall if they have a problem or a question. Most teachers here are very competent. They don't need as much help as a lot of teachers might. Sometimes I even ask them for help. It works both ways here.

School C teachers communicate a sense of shared responsibility for all of the school's children, and very few children leave the school for self-contained special education services.

School D is a recently reorganized, prototype school. It is a middle school in a system largely organized along the traditional elementary, junior high, and high school format. There is a certain self-consciousness and pride on the part of the principal and among teachers in the school in being involved in the experiment. The school had previously been an all black high school serving a basically disadvantaged population. It now serves a broader, economically mixed group. Like most secondary schools, school D is departmentalized, but the basic element of the program structure is the grade-level team composed of all teachers at a given grade level including special education teachers. This arrangement provides a natural flexibility in programming for individual students, including students in the five classes for the learning disabled. There is considerable mainstreaming of special education students, and very few new students are staffed into special classes. The school showed some signs of the strains of newness and change, but on the whole appeared to be functioning smoothly. The principal is an articulate spokesperson for the school who projects a genuine commitment to the new organizational format.

School E is the only completely open-space school in this study. The school's handicapped population, which includes several highly involved physically handicapped children, are necessarily mainstreamed in school E. Teachers, as well as students, are constantly interacting by design. The school's principal, as well as its teachers, seem devoted to the open-space school concept, which they see as allowing a school to adjust to a much broader range of individual differences among children than can be accomplished in a more traditional school setting. Over the years, this school has sent an almost negligible number of students to self-contained special education classes and then it would appear, only after a series of adjustments in the child's individual program proved to be inadequate to meet the child's needs. The principal of school E is one of the system's most highly regarded educators.

School F is a small school that previously served an affluent clientele. It now has a mixed population and the school houses one of the only two elementary classes in the system for trainable mentally retarded students in a regular school setting. The new principal of school F is a highly energetic, enthusiastic individual who has already begun to build a reputation as a capable educator after only a brief career as an administrator. Students from regular classes in school F serve on a volunteer basis as tutors for handicapped students. Teachers in school F express mixed reactions to the new regime in the school, but little open opposition to the new order is apparent. The school is one of those in the system that has had a long-standing reputation for academic excellence, and some teachers display a certain reluctance to abandon the tried and true approaches to education in favor of newer, less certain approaches. Nevertheless, the school does accommodate a variety of special education students and staffs a very small number of students into self-contained classes each year.

School G is headed by a principal who is reputed to be one of the most dynamic and extraordinary principals in the system. The principal maintains a fluid program in the school, and teachers seem very supportive of this fluidity. The principal makes a point of knowing the children in the school and making personal assessments as to what the individual needs of those children are. Children are given a period at the end of each day where they are encouraged to experiment with various subject matter offerings of their own choosing. Every six weeks, the child may choose a different activity for this period of the day.

The principal of school G resists formal differentiation of handicapped children and believes that a program that meets the individual needs of all children can serve the handicapped without labeling them as different from the rest. For a number of years this school had no formal special education services and yet the consensus throughout the system was that this principal takes care of all of school G's children including those with handicaps. An almost negligible number of students have been staffed to self-contained special education classes in this school in recent years.

School H is a very large suburban school with a largely white population. It is situated in an area of the district that has undergone dramatic population growth in recent years, in part as a reaction to busing in the central city. Ten portable buildings outside the main building suggest the magnitude of growth. The school is divided into largely self-contained classrooms, with a single resource teacher for a population of almost 700 students. Space constraints have not permitted additional services to be offered.

In spite of the school's large population, relatively few children are referred for possible special education services and few are placed in self-contained classes. However, there is little evidence that much adaptation to the needs of special children takes place. School H appears to be under stress produced by its size and rapid growth and much of the school's energy seems to be turned to coping with those stresses. The principal reports that the vast majority of the day is devoted to administrative matters.

School I once served its local, largely affluent population, but because of busing, it has undergone a shift in the general character of its students. The school continues to cling to its image of being dedicated to high academic achievement, but there is some indication that the principal and many of the teachers may feel somewhat frustrated in this ambition by the change in the school's population. The school sends a rather high number of children to self-contained placements in other schools. There is some indication that many teachers in the school are not comfortable with too wide a range of individual differences among students and are, therefore, somewhat quick to suggest special placements. The principal of school I is widely thought to be among the system's most able principals.

School J serves a mixed population near the rim of the inner city. The principal seems careful and guarded in his posture toward outsiders and displays a perference for orderliness and control. In spite of initial appearances of rigidity, the school's program structure is fluid and flexible, with team teaching and a varied curriculum. The school also has an extensive Title I reading and math support program. The programming flexibility in this school does not appear to extend to the students in the self-contained special education classes, however. There is an apparent reluctance on the part of both the principal and regular teachers to participate in mainstreaming children from the special classes. Only a moderate number of children are staffed to special education classes by this school.

School K serves a monolithically disadvantaged, racially mixed population at the rim of the inner city. The population is highly transient and students are constantly enrolling or withdrawing from the school. On the whole, the black population of the school comes from a slightly higher economic group than the white population, and according to some of the teachers in the school, this creates a certain tension in the community. The principal of the school at the time the study began gave the appearance of being somewhat tired and overwhelmed and somewhat doubtful that this school could do much to improve the life prospects of its disadvantaged population. For the most part, education at school K was routine and self-contained in both regular and special education classes. A small number of young teachers departed from this pattern somewhat through informal arrangements by which groups of children were exchanged for part of the day. Most children were taught in a wholly self-contained setting, however.

Teachers in this school seemed to feel the need for more guidance from sources outside the classroom. In sharp contrast to other groups of teachers in the study, a majority of teachers in school K responded to the survey questionnaire that the principal, the district, and the central administration all exerted too little influence over what goes on in individual classrooms. Their survey responses indicated that they felt no one was really in charge. Teachers in this school were reported to be somewhat quick to refer children for special education services, with a few teachers particularly prone to do so.

School L is located in an area containing light industry and no nearby residential areas. Nearly all the children are bused to the school from housing projects and trailer parks. The school's population is economically disadvantaged and highly transient. School L houses two self-contained classes for the educable mentally retarded, has one resource room teacher, two Title I reading support teachers and one math support teacher. Regular classrooms are largely self-contained. The principal and teachers of school L appear to share a preference for traditional, self-contained, basic education and a general resistance to mainstreaming special education students. This philosophy is largely shared by the school's special education teachers as well. However, school L staffs a moderate number of students into self-contained classes each year.

School M is a neighborhood school that serves a racially mixed, low socio-economic population on the outskirts of the central city. The principal of this school is reported to have a propensity to attempt to control every aspect of school life, down to the smallest detail. Teachers as a group in this school are fragmented and ill-at-ease. One teacher reported that when teachers complain or express disaffection over some aspect of school life, the principal is likely to respond, "If you don't like it, get out." This school is characterized by a very high rate of referral and staffing of children to special education programs. These factors combine to give school M a climate indicative of an uneasy truce among hostile factions.

School N serves a racially mixed, lower class population on the outer rim of the central city. Of all the schools in this study, it presented the most difficulty for developing a clear, stable picture of its structure and operations. School N displays an array of ambiguities and contradictions which appear to confuse the staff within the school at times. Of all the teachers in all elementary schools in the study, school N teachers complained most vigorously about discipline problems among the students although its population is very similar to those of several other schools in the group. The principal is an outgoing, personable individual who appears to be more interested in educational philosophy than in educational administration, and teachers report that the principal's attention to administrative matters, including discipline, is inconsistent and erratic. The principal vocally disapproves of categorizing and labeling children as exceptional, and yet school N has a higher rate of referring and staffing children into special education than any other school in the study.

School O is a neighborhood school in an all white, middle class insular suburb far removed from the central city. Because the community's population is so stable, the school has experienced a pronounced decline in its student population in recent years. The prospect that the school will be closed has been a rather constant threat to school O for several years.

School O, because of its radical population loss, houses a higher percentage of special education students than any other regular school in the system. There is indication that many of the school's teachers as well as members of the community feel that this is the price that must be paid in order to keep the school open.

The regular teachers in school O are by far the most atomized, autonomous group of teachers found in the study. The special education teachers are more prone to interaction among themselves, but they are factionalized as a group. There is no mainstreaming at school O and the staffing level is somewhat high.

There has been a rapid turnover in principals in school O in the last several years, and the most commonplace interpretation of this phenomenon suggests that the community and the regular teachers, most of whom live in the nearby community, worked in concert to effect the turnover. The principal of the school at the time of the study was a personable, nonassertive individual reputed to be outstanding in the area of community relations.

School P once served a portion of the city's most affluent population. It now serves a much reduced portion of that population plus a group of black children bused from across the district. It too has experienced a dramatic decline in the number of school aged children in the local community, and even busing has failed to increase the population of the school significantly. The school therefore houses several classes for the learning disabled but has nonetheless lived for several years with the constant threat of being closed.

The principal is a confident, self-assured individual who is strongly committed to quality education of the traditional sort. This principal clearly communicates a strong expectation that high quality is expected from others in the school, teachers and students alike. This principal believes that handicapped children need intensive special education and that to force them into the mainstream prematurely is to do a disservice to both the handicapped child and the non-handicapped child as well. The principal has consistently insisted that only the highest performing handicapped children be placed in the self-contained special education classes in the school, and all evidence suggests that most teachers in school P are supportive of this posture. There is considerable evidence that this school is quick to refer and staff children into special education programs.

Independent Variables

The development of performance criteria and a reasonably clear picture of each of the 16 schools in terms of those criteria provided a basis for investigating the extent to which organizational variables could be associated with differences in implementation performance. Table 3 lists the independent variables which we came to associate with the performance of schools. Information about these characteristics was developed through the survey and interviewing process described earlier.

TABLE 3

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES TO EXPLAIN DIFFERENCES IN THE PERFORMANCE OF SCHOOLS ON 94-142

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1. The leadership styles of principals
    a. authoritative democrat
    b. orderly manager
    c. laissez-faire
    d. authoritarian
2. Relations among teachers
    a. frequent sharing of tasks
    b. separated and work alone
3. Programmatic structure
    a. wide range of curricular options and support services
    b. self-contained autonomous regular classrooms with few curricular options

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We infer that these are the important things about schools for the implementation of 94-142. This cannot be proven. Our analysis is one of descriptive plausibility with some statistical reinforcement.

The study began with the idea that the leadership styles of principals might significantly affect the ways teachers interrelate with each other and work with students. There is an ambiguity in the literature on leadership about whether leaders create authority patterns in others or adapt their styles to conform to established patterns. Therefore, the question was left open. In any case, the identification of an authority pattern need not presume causation. It will be recalled that the study employs the three possible "ideal types" of principals derived from the work of Lewin, Lippitt, and White as discussed by Sidney Verba.[2]

1. Democratic. Policies are developed through group discussions guided by the leader. Group members have latitude to show initiative in carrying out tasks.

2. Authoritarian. The leader determines policy and dictates the steps for implementation so that discretion by group members is limited.

3. Laissez-faire. There is minimal leader participation in a process of freedom of individual and group decisions. The leader takes part only when asked.

The experimental research on which these concepts are based has indicated that "democratic" leadership will produce more member satisfaction, more enthusiasm for the work, work of higher quality and as much productivity as authoritarian leadership.[3] Authoritarian leadership may get a task done but the group members neither internalize goals nor make suggestions to improve performance in the way that characterizes democratically led groups. The laissez-faire leader obtains the least of any of these dimensions for the group.[4]

The "participation hypothesis" asserts that democratically led groups are more likely to be able to incorporate change into their activity because, through discussion, they appropriate new goals as their own.[5] This idea matches findings about innovation in school curricula which relates the implementation of new curricula to participatory processes in which teachers incorporate new approaches into new routines.[6]

However, research has revealed another variation in democratic leadership. Leaders may guide, persuade and perhaps manipulate group opinion under the guise of participation. This may be due to the unwillingness of the group to accept full responsibility. It is also because of the difficulty of achieving consensus where opinion is divided. Therefore, the democratic leader may have to be "authoritative." Such leadership often gives the illusion of full participation even though the group is being guided in a predetermined direction. So long as the illusion is believed, the positive benefits which follow from the "participation hypothesis" accrue.[7]

Verba points out, and our research confirms, that it is extremely difficult to distinguish between democratic leadership which guides and presents choices in an open manner and that which manipulates. In any case, such leadership departs from the pure experimental model in which the group guides the leader more than or as much as it is guided.

We found no examples of this pure model in our schools. We did find, among teachers, a strong and dominant norm for what we call the "authoritative democrat."[8] Our interviews with teachers revealed that they expect strength in principals because they want to be protected--from parents, advocate groups, sometimes from students, and from higher administrators. But they also want a principal who listens and respects their views. Such a leadership style contains both elements of persuasion and manipulation, as our studies show, and we have not attempted to disentangle these qualities.

We found few examples of the pure authoritarian type. Most of the pure authoritarians seem to have disappeared. The pure laissez-faire type is also rare. Principals must do more than ignore problems, but we did find some who seemed to do as little as possible. Although several principals in the study were characterized by teachers as laissez-faire in their authority styles, their performances as administrators divided the laissez-faire leaders into two sub-groups. Teachers were asked the question, "Does your principal do everything he/she can to make your job easier?" Laissez-faire principals who received high, positive responses from teachers on this survey question also tended to receive generally favorable overall evaluations from teachers in the personal interviews. Laissez-faire principals receiving high, negative responses from teachers on this question were subsequently evaluated much less favorably by teachers in interviews. We retained this distinction in our final classification of leadership types, reserving the label, laissez-faire, for those principals who were neither active leaders nor efficient administrators. Principals who were described as passive leaders but efficient, facilitative administrators we called orderly managers.

In short, we began with the three experimentally developed types and revised and elaborated them in response to the descriptive material developed by our research. Our other independent variables, relations among teachers and programmatic structure, were subjects for study from the beginning. However, we did think it likely that a principal with a "democratic" style would be found in schools with a high degree of collegiality among teachers.

A discussion of the independent variables in the actual school settings should give further indication of their meanings.

The Independent Variables in Schools

In spite of the many differences found among the schools in each distinct group, there were striking similarities which help to account for the clusters which resulted.

High Performers

The seven schools in the high performer category are representative of the variety of demographic characteristics among elementary schools in general. These differences in general appearance may be more than superficial in their effects on the public elementary school, but in terms of the requirements of 94-142, the differences are less important than the similarities to be found among the seven schools.

The most significant similarity among these schools for the purposes of this study is their commitment and their capacity to meet the needs of the individual child to an extent unlikely to be found in the typical elementary school. This shared characteristic has different causes in different schools, but certain distinct patterns emerge from this limited sample.

In four of the seven high performing schools, the principal is the most important factor contributing to the school's performance. These four principals share certain attributes that produce an environment favorable to the implementation of 94-142. Most prominent among these shared characteristics are leadership style and energetic involvement with all facets of the lives of their schools. Leadership for these principals is an active pursuit.

The evidence produced by this study indicates that these four principals involve their faculties in the decision-making process of the schools. Each of them encourages genuine exchange as an element of the decision-making process. Certain types of decisions may afford more opportunity for exchange of ideas and opinions than others, but rarely do teachers in these schools report feeling excluded from decisions that have an effect on the lives of their respective schools. At the same time that these principals are reported by teachers to be highly tolerant of differences of opinion and generally open to suggestions, they are also reported to be strong, decisive, and always in control of the situation at hand. The leadership style of these principals is most aptly labeled as authoritative democrat and the decision-making situation as structured democracy.*

Although the strong democratic leader is relatively rare among elementary school principals, the characteristics of the four schools in this study in which such principals were found would suggest that a variety of environments are hospitable to the authoritative democratic leadership style. The size of the four schools ranges from less than 200 students to 500 students. The racial composition of these schools is comprised of less than 10% black at the low extreme, and very nearly 50% black at the high extreme, with the SES levels of the schools' populations varying widely as well.

In the three remaining high performing schools, principals were of considerably less immediate importance than other factors in accounting for performance. Included among these three remaining high performers is a large inner city school with an extremely low SES population, a lower middle class suburban school, and a middle school (grades 5-8) with a mixed SES population. Teachers in these three schools saw their principals as competent administrators who work hard to see that teachers are able to devote most of their energies to the classroom. However, teachers did not see these principals as vigorous leaders with the active decision-making posture of the authoritative democrat, but rather as reluctant decision makers even though they tend to be energetic administrators.

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*Three of these four principals were in the schools selected because their principles are widely regarded as outstanding. Therefore, it is likely that principals with the authoritative democratic leadership style are represented more heavily in our study than their actual distribution in the system.

It was the teachers themselves who appear to make the difference that contributes to high performance on 94-142 in these three schools. In terms of age, extent of education, and other general characteristics, these teachers did not differ appreciably from other teachers in other schools in the study. However, they were characterized by an extraordinary collegiality and a sense of mission far exceeding that of the typical elementary school faculty in this study. The specific character of the sense of mission was somewhat different for each group of teachers, but the strength of that sense was similar for each group.

In the large inner city school, teachers frequently expressed a great sense of satisfaction from helping children who are uniformly disadvantaged. Children with handicaps, as defined by P. L. 94-142, were not seen by these teachers or their principal as being qualitatively different from the rest of the school's population. Only the nature of the disadvantage was different for the handicapped child. Although this same sense of mission is not uncommon among individual teachers in inner city schools, it was embodied in the faculty of this particular school as a shared community value to an extraordinary degree. This shared sense of mission was accompanied by a strong, mutual fondness among the faculty that was not diminished by the unusually large size of the school. When asked what they liked best about their jobs, teachers who were interviewed in this school consistently specified the other teachers as the single most pleasant aspect.

In the suburban school where teachers were the most important factor contributing to high performance, the camaraderie took a somewhat different form. Teachers in this school expressed a high regard for the professional competence of their fellow teachers as well as a strong self-confidence in their own personal professional capabilities. Their sense of mission took the form of a strong commitment to the idea that as professionals, it was their responsibility to serve the children sent to them by the community. Making personal adjustments in order to meet the needs of children with special needs was seen as a part of that professional responsibility. The resource room program in the school was well used to serve a broad range of children, and sending a child to a self-contained special education class in another school was considered to be a last resort, to be used only after the total professional expertise of the school had proven inadequate to meet the needs of the child.

In the high performing middle school, collegiality was in some measure incorporated into the organizational design of the school. Working in teams and sharing responsibilities for individual children was a part of the middle school concept. Because the school was only a year old in its reorganized form and was seen as a prototype for the school system being studied, teachers seemed to feel that they were a part of a worthwhile experiment, which further contributed to their collegiality.

It is difficult to say whether unusual cohesiveness among teachers in a particular school results from specific causes or comes about fortuitously.

Principals can undoubtedly foster it, although they may not be able to bring it about in the absence of "natural" compatibilities among a group of teachers. Although the data of this study cannot speak to the causes of unusual faculty collegiality, it does suggest that a higher degree of collegiality among teachers contributes to an environment favorable to the implementation of P. L. 94-142 in an elementary school setting.

Opportunities for teachers to nurture collegial relationships in these schools were almost certainly enhanced by the efficient, facilitative administrative style of their principals.

Although energetic, open leadership styles of principals and pronounced collegiality among teachers contribute greatly to the differences this study found in the 16 particular contexts of implementation, there is a third variable that clearly exerts some independent influence on the process of implementation of 94-142 in individual schools. We have called that variable "program structure," an important determinant of a school's ability to adjust to individual differences among children. In other words, a flexible program structure can provide principals and teachers with an enhanced opportunity to accommodate individual differences among children in a regular school setting.

Program structure as a variable at the school building level emerged as a result of comparisons of the allocations by different schools of instructional responsibilities. In some schools, the self-contained regular classroom still dominates the program structure of the school. Children may go out of the room for physical education, but by and large, they stay with the same teacher all day. In other schools, children may be grouped according to their performance levels for reading and math and sent to one teacher if they are high performers, another if they are average performers, and to still another teacher if they are low performers. This ability (performance) grouping allows a broader range of performance levels among children to be accommodated in a regular classroom setting than might be easily managed in a self-contained regular classroom.

Elementary schools differ in other aspects of program organization as well. The extent to which teachers work together as teams, either trading off responsibilities for certain subjects or sharing responsibilities, is another source of program variation. Ability grouping and team teaching practices are sometimes formalized by departmentalization, although this formal organization feature is relatively rare at the elementary school level.

Even the basically self-contained regular classroom program structure need not entirely restrict the variety of service options for children if there exists some conscious commitment in a school to adjusting to meet the needs of the exceptional child. Teachers and the principal in one high performing school reported that it was sometimes their practice to move children to another classroom or for teachers to exchange them informally in order to attempt to find an environment more hospitable to a child's development. It is not surprising that this mode of adjusting to the individual needs of children was found in the school with high teacher collegiality based upon mutual respect and a pronounced sense of professional responsibility.

All of these program variations, both formal and informal, can serve as resources for a school which allow it to serve a broader range of children's needs in a fully mainstreamed setting with less stress than might be produced by the same range of individual needs in a totally self-contained regular classroom setting. These program variations can also provide enhanced opportunities for schools that house self-contained special education classes to mainstream children from those classes for some portion of the day. Additional opportunities for mainstreaming self-contained special education children are present in programs that offer art and music as a regular part of the school curriculum. Schools adhering more closely to a traditional "basics" curriculum with little in the way of enrichment activities are less likely to be able to do social mainstreaming with ease.

The evidence suggests that a differentiated program structure creates opportunities which can substantially increase the ease of achieving full implementation. A differentiated program structure characterized all of our high performing schools. There were differentiated program structures in some schools in the middle and low performing categories as well, suggesting that program structure alone does not guarantee that a school will score well on the performance criteria used in this study. High performers share characteristics that appear to account for their position in the implementation classification scheme. Schools in the other performance strata may exhibit some of the same characteristics, but they do not display this broader configuration of characteristics found in the high performance group.

Middle Performers

Principals from the middle performing schools occupy all four leadership style categories. Three of the five were described as good managers by their teachers, but all were viewed as less attentive to educational leadership than were the authoritative democrats and orderly managers in the high performing category. Teacher interaction is high in three of the middle performing schools, with a medium interaction level in the others. The self-contained classroom is the dominant program structure in three of the five schools, with some program variation in the remaining two schools.

Three of the five middle performers have transient, disadvantaged populations and face difficult educational tasks. Whereas this factor seemed to serve as a stimulus in some of the higher performing schools, it appears to constitute a burden for these middle performers. A fourth middle performer is so large that day-to-day management consumes the principal. The large school in the high performer category seemed much less overwhelmed by problems of administration. Principals in the disadvantaged schools were described respectively as authoritarian, laissez-faire, and orderly manager. The principal of the large school was also described as an orderly manager.

The fifth middle performing school stands somewhat apart from the other four. The principal is highly regarded and appears to be an "authoritative democrat." The school is located in a middle/upper middle class neighborhood and has traditionally enjoyed the reputation of being a "good" school academically. Busing has brought less affluent minority children into the school's population in recent years. However, there has been resistance to taking self-contained special education classes into the building because of the strong academic values which the principal and teachers share. Handicapped students would further change the character of the school.

In these middle performing schools, standardization seems to be preferred to individualization, although this is difficult to document. For the non-handicapped child, these are perfectly adequate schools in which there is order and regularity. All are in pro forma compliance with P. L. 94-142, but none have stirred themselves to go beyond pro forma compliance.

Low Performers

There seem to be only a few ways to succeed but there are many ways to fail. Failure, in this particular case, refers to only the most mechanical, low effort, pro forma compliance with P. L. 94-142 as gauged by this study's criteria of implementation. The four low performers in our implementation classification scheme are considerably more diverse a group than those in either of the other two groups.

In one school, the principal is depicted by teachers as a very typical laissez-faire leader. The teachers in the school scarcely speak to each other; they talk rather openly about the atomistic, individualistic norm that prevails in the school. Accompanying this norm, and undoubtedly reinforcing it, is a self-contained classroom program structure for both regular and special education classes. This unyielding environment produced very low performance on the implementation scale for the school.

In a second low performing school, the principal espouses a strong commitment to effective learning, opposition to the labeling of children, and a determination to create flexible programs for all children. Teachers perceive this principal as arbitrary, inconsistent, and a poor manager. Some teachers report that there is so little disciplining of students that the school is in constant turmoil.

The principal of the third school is described by teachers as quite authoritarian. This principal requires that teachers sign in and out of the school. Teachers, however, do not see this principal as an effective administrator. The program structure of the school allows for some flexibility, but that flexibility is not used in ways that improve performance on 94-142 as defined by our criteria of implementation.

The fourth school, by traditional educational standards, would be regarded as an excellent school. It has a long tradition of high academic standards, and achievement test scores from the school are typically high. The principal of the school is a strong and effective but open person who is described by teachers as an authoritative democrat. Both the principal and the teachers insist upon having only the most mildly handicapped children in the school's several self-contained special education classe for the specific learning disabled. The self-contained classroom serves as the instructional medium for both regular and special education classes. Teachers in this school meet regularly as a group under the tutelage of the principal, but otherwise they largely tend to work alone.

To the extent that there is a clear pattern among the middle performing and the low performing schools, that pattern seems to be a relative lack of that configuration of characteristics found widely among the high performing schools. The following statistical analysis suggests that, in these particular 16 schools, this is the case.

Analysis

All teachers in the 16 selected schools were mailed survey research questionnaires. In addition, regular and special education teachers at each school were interviewed by the research staff. Each teacher was asked specific questions about the leadership style of his principal, his perception of teacher interaction at their school, and questions that revealed the program structure of each school.

In an effort to disaggregate the relationships between the independent variables--leadership style, teacher interaction, and programmatic structure; and the dependent variable--performance status on 94-142, each independent variable was cross-tabulated with performance status. Table IV gives the relationship between leadership style of the principal and performance status on 94-142.

TABLE 4

Study School Classified by Leadership Style of the Principal (Authoritarian, Laissez-Faire, Orderly Manager, Authoritative Democrat) and Performance Status (High, Middle, Low) on 94-142

	Leadership Style			
Performance Status	Authoritarian	Laissez-Faire	Orderly Manager	Authoritative Democrat
High	0	0	3	4
Middle	1	1	2	1
Low	1	2	0	1

In the high performance category, all school principals were either authoritative democrats or orderly managers. Orderly managers were described earlier as principals with a laissez-faire authority style who are also very efficient, facilitative administrators. Fewer democratic principals and orderly managers were found in the low performance category. In general, the distribution of leadership styles of the principals shifts from predominantly laissez-faire in the low performance category to predominantly democratic in the high performance category.

The second independent variable, teacher interaction, was categorized as high. medium, or low. If teachers frequently shared tasks and worked closely together on various projects, the school was classified as having high teacher interaction. If the teachers in a school worked separately all of the time the school was classified as having low teacher interaction. A school was classified as mixed on teacher interaction if certain factions of the faculty worked alone all of the time while separate factions of the faculty shared tasks frequently.

The relationship between teacher interaction and performance status on P. L. 94-142 is shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5

Study Schools Classified by Teacher Interaction (Low, Middle, High) and Performance on 94-142 (Low, Middle, High)

	Teacher	Interaction	
Performance Status	Low	Middle	High
High	0	0	7
Middle	0	2	3
Low	3	1	0

All high performing schools had a high degree of teacher interaction. In the middle performing schools, 60% had high teacher interaction and 40% mixed interaction. In general, as the performance status ranges from low to high, teacher interaction also ranges from low to high, indicating a strong relationship between teacher interaction and performance status on 94-142.

The third independent variable, programmatic structure of the school, captures the curricular options and support services available at each school. The components of this measure are (1) ability grouping of students, (2) team teaching of students, (3) departmentalization, (4) enrichment programs such as art, music and crafts, (5) informal exchange of students, and (6) open classrooms. A score was constructed for the programmatic structure in a school by scoring a one for every program component present in a school and counting the value for each programmatic structure component to obtain the total score.

The minimum score for each school was zero and the maximum was six. Table 6 shows the average score for the three performance categories.

TABLE 6

Average Programmatic Structure

Score for Each Performance Category

Performance Status	Programmatic Structure Score
High	3.7
Middle	2.2
Low	2.5

As with the other two independent variables, programmatic structure in a given school is also related to performance status on 94-142. In general, the high performing schools have more curricular options and support services available as a resource for handicapped children.

Although each independent variable is related to performance status when considered separately, a further analysis was necessary to determine the magnitude of the relationship between the dependent variable and each independent variable after adjusting for any correlation with the remaining independent variables. For example, if leadership style of the principal is correlated with teacher interaction and programmatic structure in the school, the true effect of leadership style on performance status can only be evaluated after an adjustment of the effect of leadership style for these correlations among the independent variables. Thus, the statistical procedure of regression analysis was used to determine the independent effects of teacher interaction, programmatic structure of the school, and leadership style of the principal.

TABLE 7

Independent Relationships Between Performance Status on 94-142 and Teacher Interaction, Programmatic Structure and Leadership Style of the Principal

Variable	Standardized Coefficient	P Value	Explained % Variation
Teacher Interaction	.53	p .01	59.9
Programmatic Structure	.38	p .05	11.9
Leadership Style	.20	NS	3.2

The regression method revealed that of the three independent variables considered in the analysis, the independent effect of teacher interaction was more closely correlated with performance status than either programmatic structure of the school or leadership style of the principal. The independent effect of programmatic structure was less correlated with performance status than teacher interaction and the independent effect of leadership style of the principal was the independent variable that was least correlated with performance status (Table 7).

Although this analysis indicates that leadership style of the principal after adjustment for teacher interaction and programmatic structure is not highly correlated with performance status on 94-142, this does not mean that leadership style of the principal should be dismissed as unimportant. One could conjecture that leadership style of the principal fosters innovation through increasing teacher interaction and increasing curricular options and support services available in their school. For example, Table 8 shows the relationship between leadership style of the principal and teacher interaction.

TABLE 8

Study Schools Classified by Leadership Style of the Principal and Teacher Interaction

Leadership Style of Principal	Teacher Interaction		
	Low	Mixed	High
Authoritarian	0	1	1
Laissez-Faire	2	1	0
Authoritative Democrat	1	0	4
Orderly Manager	0	1	5

In the authoritative democrat and orderly manager categories, most of the schools exhibit high teacher interaction. Fewer schools with high teacher interaction occur in the other leadership style categories. Although these data cannot prove that qualities of leadership causes high teacher interaction, they are supportive of the hypothesis that leadership style may have an effect on performance status on 94-142 by contributing to teacher interaction.

Another way in which leadership style might affect performance on 94-142 is through variation of the curriculum in a given school. This variation in curriculum is assessed through our programmatic structure variable. The schools that have authoritative democrats or orderly managers as their principals score relatively higher in terms of the programmatic variable than the laissez-faire or the authoritarian schools. This suggests that democratic leadership style may have fostered innovation in the programmatic structure of the study schools, although this study cannot really analyze that relationship beyond acknowledging the possibility that it exists.

Even though the analysis shows that teacher interaction and programmatic structure of the schools are more important than leadership style of the principal, this style may contribute to high teacher interaction and more options in programmatic structure in the high performing schools. Data that go beyond the scope of this study would be required in order to assess possible interrelationships among these independent variables.

This study did not attempt to make formal determinations of the philosophies of education embraced by principals in the 16 elementary schools. However, considerable qualitative evidence from extensive interviews with the principals suggests that the effects of leadership style may not be totally independent of educational philosophy. All principals in the high performing schools were inclined to view traditional academic achievement as one of several goals of education and not necessarily paramount to other goals. These four authoritative democrats and three orderly managers seemed to feel comfortable with the idea that children have a broad range of individual needs that may not yield to narrowly prescribed modes of programming and instruction. The two authoritative democratic principals and the two orderly managers in the other performance categories were inclined to elevate academic achievement above other possible educational goals. Although the data from this study does not permit statistical treatment of educational philosophy as an independent variable, its probable importance is nonetheless acknowledged.

Post Script

The bulk of the data on the 16 elementary schools was collect during the school year 1978-79. In 1979-80, changes or attempts at change occurred in three of our middle performing schools.

School K began the academic year 1979-80 with a different principal. Interviews with the district leadership indicated that the change was made in an effort to correct increasingly strained relations between the former principal and the community. The new principal is an individual of great experience, energy, and tact who communicates an articulate, favorable opinion of P. L. 94-142 and its requirements. Mainstreaming of students from the self-contained special education classes was occurring, (only a few weeks into the new school year) and the principal had arranged for a series of parent enablement seminars intended to bring the community and the school closer together.

Teachers in the school reported a thorough change in both the level and the style of leadership in the school, and district administrators spoke with pride about a problem school that had quickly been transformed into a success. It is interesting to note that school K is in the district whose district administrators are the most assertive in their leadership style.

The magnitude and direction of change to date in school K would suggest that if the study were done again and the performance criteria applied to the resulting data, school K might very well appear in a higher position on the performance scale. Dramatic shifts can occur in a short time when leadership is exerted.

Changes in school K gave us new supporting information about the capacity of leadership to promote change. Attempts at change in schools J and L resulted from the system merger of LD classes and EMR classes into the more general comprehensive development classes. Special education teachers in schools J and L, like teachers all over the system, were uncomfortable with the prospect of serving what they believed to be two dissimilar populations in a single class. The principals of the two schools in turn voiced objections to the district director of elementary education and the special education coordinator assigned to the district.

The special education coordinator, who is a vocal advocate for the collapse of categories, suggested a strategy by which the special education teachers in each of the schools could give specialized attention to each of the two categories of children in the class by mainstreaming one disability group for part of the day and then mainstreaming the other disability group for another part of the day. Neither school had previously mainstreamed children from the special classes. Both principals raised the initial objection that a number of the children in their special classes were low performing and would very probably be disruptive in regular classes. The special education coordinator replied that the low performing students need not be mainstreamed for heavily academic work. He suggested that they be sent out for art or music or other activities for which low academic performance would be less of a factor.

According to the special education coordinator, the principal of school J quickly acknowledged the feasibility of incorporating mainstreaming as an aspect of the new comprehensive development classes. School J already had well-developed programs in art and music, and the movement of children from regular classes for instructional purposes was already practiced. The principal was persuaded that very little change would be required in order to include children from the special education classes in the school's general program and routine. The opportunities for mainstreaming had been present in the school all along, but until the district intervened, those opportunities had not been utilized.

In school L, the effort at change was more complicated. Unlike school J, school L had a rigid program structure and limited curricular offerings with completely self-contained regular classrooms. It lacked the well-developed art and music programs of school J, and it lacked experience in moving children for instructional purposes during the course of the day. The principal of school L was much more resistant to the idea of the comprehensive development classes because substantially more change would be required in school L in order to incorporate mainstreaming as an aspect of the new type of class. The special education coordinator reported that the principal of school L reluctantly agreed to do the best he could to make the new type of class work but that the prospects of its being easily accomplished were much less promising in school L than in school J because of the differences in program structure.

These subsequent developments in elementary schools that had been studied during the project's first phase bolstered the conclusions drawn from the original data as to the factors seeming to influence implementation of P. L. 94-142 in 16 schools. As these subsequent developments were occurring, the project's second phase was focusing on those factors seeming to influence implementation of P. L. 94-142 in secondary schools.

Footnotes

[1] Richard A. Johnson makes a strong case for considering maximum use of home school options as a legitimate aspect of Least Restrictive Environment in his essay "Renewal of School Placement Systems for the Handicapped," in F. J. Weintraub, A. Abeson, J. Ballard, and M. L. Lavor, eds., Public Policy and the Education of Exceptional Children (Reston, Virginia: Council for Exceptional Children, 1975), 47-61.

[2] Small Groups and Political Behavior: A Study of Leadership (Princeton: Princeton Uninversity Press, 1961), 202-225.

[3] Ibid., 210.

[4] Ibid., 215-216.

[5] Ibid., 206.

[6] Paul Berman and Milbrey McLaughlin, Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change,Vol. IV: The Findings in Review (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1975).

[7] Verba, op. cit., 224.

[8] The standardized survey of teachers produced this finding.

CHAPTER 5

Secondary Schools

While analysis of the elementary school data was being completed, field work began in the secondary schools in the winter of academic year 1979-1980. Secondary education is conducted in 15 junior high schools (grades 7-8) and 18 senior high schools (grades 9-12). There is considerable variation among the high schools in terms of population and programmatic diversity, ranging from the largely traditional community high schools with populations under 1,000 students to the modern comprehensive high schools with populations approaching 3,000 students. The junior high schools are much more uniform in their curriculum and typically house about 500 students.

Because secondary schools are larger and more complex than elementary schools and are considerably less numerous, it was decided to study the smallest number of secondary schools that would still allow differences in district leadership to be taken into account. One junior high school and one senior high school were selected from each of the three districts. Because of the general uniformity among junior high schools in the system, the variety of special education services available in the schools was the primary basis for selection of the three junior high schools to be studied. There is very little variation in the special education services offered in the high schools but much variety among them in size and general program structure. Senior high schools were chosen in an effort to capture the range of variation in these characteristics.

Research on the secondary schools consisted entirely of personal interviews. No survey questionnaire was employed in the secondary schools because it quickly became apparent that most teachers in secondary schools have little or no contact with activities associated with the implementation of 94-142 in their schools. Since the research questions for the secondary schools remained the same as they had been for the elementary schools, it seemed desirable to concentrate research efforts in those areas most likely to produce information with direct bearing on the implementation of P. L. 94-142.

All principals and assistant principals (18), guidance counselors (13), special education teachers (20), and psychologists (6) were interviewed in each junior high school and senior high school studied. Each of these individuals was asked to suggest regular teachers who had worked with students from special education and who would be knowledgeable about special education in the school. On the basis of these recommendations, 32 regular teachers were interviewed. All district and central administrators concerned with secondary education as well as special education staff were also interviewed about the six schools.

By the time the secondary school phase of the study began, members of the project had established a clear understanding of what the implementation of P. L. 94-142 had come to involve in the elementary schools. Early in the course of the secondary school field work, it became clear that our understanding of the elementary schools could not be transferred unaltered to the secondary schools. Organizational and historical differences between the two levels of the educational system were accompanied by differences in the implementation of P. L. 94-142 at each level. It was clear that these differences would necessitate different criteria of implementation as well.

Secondary Schools as Educational Organizations

Secondary schools are substantially more bureaucratic than elementary schools by virtue of their size, their greater emphasis on specialization by subject matter, and a generally more pronounced differentiation between administration and teaching. Principals in secondary schools seem farther removed from classroom instruction than their elementary counterparts, and they appear to delegate more of the responsibility for instruction to department heads and other teachers than does the typical elementary principal. It might be said that elementary schools resemble small, basically egalitarian communities, while secondary schools are more nearly hierarchical bureaucracies.

The most pronounced contrasts are between elementary schools and senior high schools. Junior high schools seem to be caught somewhere in between. Organizationally, they resemble senior high schools with their departmentalization and specialization by subject matter. Junior high schools tend, however, to be closer to large elementary schools in size and to have a more set curriculum than senior high schools. Interviews with junior high school teachers indicate that they see seventh and eighth grade students as midway between the dependency of elementary school and the independence of high school. Conventional wisdom holds that elementary school teachers teach children and high school teachers teach subjects. Junior high school teachers appear to combine these two teaching postures to accord with the transitional nature of junior high school students.

These broad organizational differences have been paralleled by historical differences in the development and practice of special education in this school system. In terms of the numbers of students served and the variety of services offered, special education has been overwhelmingly an elementary school affair. Secondary schools have been far less affected by the changes in and growth of special education programs in the last decade than have the elementary schools. Elementary schools have steadily increased the numbers and varieties of handicapped children they serve, but secondary schools continue to serve essentially the same population they have always served--the educable mentally retarded.

There is evidence to suggest that this pattern will gradually be altered as groups of physically handicapped students, previously served in highly specialized settings but increasingly being served in regular elementary school settings, reach secondary school age and expect to continue their education in a regular school environment. Programs for the multiple physically handicapped and for the severely hearing impaired have been started in at least two junior high schools in this system in recent years.

In spite of these portents of change, however, secondary schools across this system continue to be very limited in the special education services they offer and in the handicapped populations they serve.

Implementation Differences in the Secondary Schools

All of these differences between elementary schools and secondary schools have implications for the implementation of P. L. 94-142 in the two settings. The array of requirements specified in the law are more nearly attuned to elementary education as it is practiced in the school system than to secondary education.

In elementary schools, much of the time and energy expended on the implementation of the law is directed toward child find. The referral and staffing processes are components of the child find activity, and together they constitute a significant part of the implementation process at the elementary level. At the secondary level, however, identification activity becomes an almost negligible part of the implementation of P. L. 94-142.

The historical lack of special education services in the secondary schools seem to account for most of this pronounced decline in the rate of child find. Because secondary schools provide special education services almost exclusively for the educable mentally retarded, almost all of the population eligible for these services have already been identified at an earlier stage in the educational process. To the extent that referral and staffing activities take place at the secondary level, they largely involve students new to the school system or referrals from agencies outside the school system.

All of this is not to say that child find is unnecessary in the secondary schools because all students in need of special education services have been found. Teachers, principals, and guidance counselors uniformly report that a significant number of students who would benefit from special services are struggling in the regular program. Because the needed services are not available, little can be done to address the problem.

Before the merging of the Learning Disabled and EMR categories in this school system, by far the largest number of students receiving special education services were classified as LD. EMR was the third largest category. Although there were a few LD classes in the junior high schools, there were none in the senior high schools.

An elementary school special education teacher responsible for a class of LD children close to junior high school age expressed concern in her interview because she knew services would probably be unavailable for these students when they got beyond elementary school age. In her opinion, several of them were simply not ready for complete placement in the mainstream, but she was certain that a full-time regular program placement would be all that was available for them. Secondary school personnel suggest that many of the students in need of extra services in the regular program come from this large population of LD students that suddenly vanishes in high school.

The organizational character of secondary schools appears to make an independent contribution to this phenomenon as well. Because of the variety of curricular offerings in high schools, students with academic performance problems can pursue programs which minimize the effects of their learning difficulties. Most secondary school personnel interviewed did not believe that this state of affairs was in the best interest of students with learning difficulties, and most felt that their schools contained large numbers of such children.

Lack of adequate special education services in the secondary schools is a system-wide condition that affects all secondary schools equally. In addition, it is a problem over which individual schools have very little control. Activities relating to child find do not suggest viable criteria for making implementation performance distinctions among secondary schools as they did at the elementary school level because through no fault of the individu schools themselves, child find activities represent such a negligible part of the implementation process in secondary schools. High schools in the study had referral rates of no more than 1% and many of those were reevaluations of students already in special education. Referral rates were somewhat higher in some of the junior high schools studied, but not significantly so.

Performance Criteria in the Secondary Schools

In the elementary school chapter, it was argued that performance criteria designed to capture performance differences among schools must be based on what actually takes place in schools that can be related to the requirements of P. L. 94-142. In the case of secondary schools, those activities are limited, if not in magnitude, at least in variety.

Special education activities in high schools center around the self-contained EMR classroom since that is the dominant special education service at the secondary level. Junior high schools have a somewhat wider array of services, including resource room programs in some junior high schools, but as in the case of senior high schools, they basically serve students who come to them already identified as handicapped.

Because the self-contained special education class is the primary unit of service in secondary schools, the extent of mainstreaming within individual schools proves to be the most promising criterion by which to compare schools. Mainstreaming as a criterion of performance at the secondary level is fraught with the same problems that characterized it as a criterion at the elementary level. It is impossible for the researcher to know if all students for whom mainstreaming is objectively feasible are being mainstreamed in a given school or whether those being mainstreamed are appropriately served. These difficulties do not eliminate the extent of mainstreaming as a appropriate criterion of implementation performance, but they do limit its utility as a definitive basis of judgment.

Some degree of mainstreaming of students from the self-contained special education classes into classes in the regular program was occurring in all six of the secondary schools examined in this study. Interviews with regular teachers in each school produced somewhat different pictures of the perceived appropriateness of mainstreaming from school to school as assessed by those teachers. A combination of these two factors served as a general guide for assessing implementation performance in the secondary schools.

Performance Differences Among the Secondary Schools

The several differences between junior high schools and senior high schools as educational organizations make it desirable to assess implementation performance in the junior high schools and in the senior high schools separately. Therefore, the three junior high schools in the study were compared with each other on the extent of mainstreaming from self-contained classes and on regular teachers' perceptions of the appropriateness of that mainstreaming in each school. In the same way, the three senior high schools were compared with each other in terms of those same criteria.

Performance differences among the three junior high schools were subtle and difficult to distinguish. Differences among the three senior high schools were more pronounced and therefore much easier to analyze.

Junior High Schools

The three junior high schools are typical of the system, both in their curriculum and administrative structure. Instruction is offered in four academic subjects--English, mathematics, science, and social studies--plus electives or "related arts" (home economics, industrial arts, music, and art) and physical education. Each school is headed by a principal, assistant principal, and one or more guidance counselors.

Junior high school A shares these characteristics, but it differs from the other two in the study both in its organization and in its handicapped population. Located in a well-to-do residential area, the school has a 65%

black population; the school's faculty is grouped in four-member teams as well as subject-matter departments. Members of a single team--a teacher for each of the four academic subjects--share a common group of students. Several teams are grouped together in each of three "mini schools" headed by lead teachers.

Among the school's 450 students are a class of 7 multiple, physically handicapped students, the first such group to have been in regular elementary schools and now to attend a regular junior high school. The special education program also includes an EMR-LD class of 15 students and a resource room teacher who works with 60 students.

The principal is a consultative and participatory leader who prefers to leave many decisions up to the faculty. The assistant principal assumes a more managerial role, which includes monitoring implementation of 94-142 and other programs. Both administrators rely more on the professionalism of the faculty than on edict.

Both administrators are conversant with the provisions of 94-142 and its implications for their school. Recently their time has been spent more on the new group of multiple-handicapped children than on the retarded and learning disabled. They placed the group with the team of teachers that they judged to be most flexible, and arranged orientation sessions with the students' former elementary principal. Their time has also been spent on jurisdictional disputes involving children with special educational needs who live in group homes and halfway houses in the school's attendance zone.

The multiple-handicapped students are mainstreamed for all subjects except physical education. Their special education teacher is part of their instructional team and provides individual assistance to both students and faculty. All of the EMR-LD students are mainstreamed for physical education and related arts, and eight are mainstreamed for one or more academic subjects. Most of the regular teachers report favorable impressions of their experiences with mainstreaming. They feel adequately supported by the special education teachers, both of whom place a high priority on working with other teachers.

Teachers in this school note a lack of direction from the principal on most educational matters including 94-142. However, most do not think additional leadership is necessary; they think the mini-schools function well under the guidance of the lead teachers. They also believe that the special education teachers are exceptional in their efforts to integrate their students into the regular program, and that these efforts are by and large successful.

Junior high school B is located in an outlying section of the city in the midst of middle and lower-middle class residential developments. It houses over 500 seventh and eighth grade students, about 70% of whom are black. The black population of both the school and the neighborhood has increased steadily since 1970.

The special education program consists of a resource room teacher serving about 40 students and an EMR-LD class of 14 students. Itinerant teachers provide services to several students in regular classes with speech impairments and to one partially blind student. There is one wheelchair-bound student who requires no special education services for whom physical accommodations have been made.

The principal is a soft-spoken individual who describes himself as a democratic administrator, pointing to faculty committees and informal networks as ways in which the staff influences decisions. Faculty members, however, see the school as a tightly run hierarchy with considerable emphasis on rules and regulations. They are not necessarily dissatisfied with this arrangement. In fact, the principal is generally well regarded by the staff. They point out that most decisions are handed down without consultation with faculty members, but they are appreciative of the atmosphere of orderliness that prevails.

The most common complaint about the general administration of the school is more subtle but probably results from this style of authority. Teachers feel that there is little in the way of professional discussion or joint undertakings among the staff. They would like more professional interaction, but neither the instructional program nor the administrative routines of the school provide opportunities for it.

The principal speaks knowledgeably of P. L. 94-142 and of the range of services available at the school. Faculty members do not, however, perceive administrative leadership on this policy. The principal's main role is as a troubleshooter with parents and, if necessary, with the special education department. Officially, the two guidance counselors have the primary coordinating and leadership role in the processes of referrals, staffings, and scheduling for mainstreamed students. In fact, the counselors exhibit little knowledge of the issues involved in these processes and generally defer to the school psychologist and special education teachers. Their role appears to be primarily clerical--recording changes in students' schedules or status--rather than substantive.

The resource room teacher has provided most of the leadership in the school on P. L. 94-142. He screens all referrals and determines whether a complete psychological evaluation is needed. Not many cases become fullfledged referrals. In addition, he acts as a consultant to regular teachers (about other students as well as his own) and has provided education on the law for the rest of the faculty.

The EMR-LD teacher has just completed her second year at the school, having been transferred there (with her class) from a special school. She feels rather isolated from the rest of the school, but does little to initiate more contact. The resource room teacher has encouraged her to mainstream some of her students and she has done so. All of her students take regular physical education and art or music, ten attend industrial arts or home economics, and eight are in a regular academic class. She relies on her intuitive sense of other teachers' receptivity in making mainstreaming decisions, but she does not often discuss it with them. Students who ask to attend a regular class are allowed to try it whether or not they are considered ready for it. The EMR-LD teacher estimates that his students succeed in regular classes about half the time.

Regular teachers are skeptical of this unsystematic approach. Most are not opposed to mainstreaming in principle, but several have had unsatisfactory experiences. They have had problems with students whom they later discovered were from the EMR-LD class. They felt they could have accommodated the students better had they received more information and support from the special education teacher.

Junior high school C is located in a suburban area near a large comprehensive high school. The student population numbers close to 600 of whom 30%

are black. The special education program consists of a resource room teacher serving about 40 students, an EMR-LD class of 22 students and a class of 6 trainable mentally retarded students.

The principal's leadership style combines democracy with a laissez-faire attitude toward most instructional matters. The staff perceives a lack of knowledge or concern about problems in the school (such as discipline), and a failure to set consistent policy about issues that affect the whole school. On the other hand, teachers favor the principal's permissive attitude toward educational practice because it allows them flexibility and autonomy.

The principal has exerted little leadership regarding 94-142. A former resource room teacher appears to have been very aggressive in educating the faculty about the law and what it requires of them. The guidance counselor now plays a major role, not only in referrals and staffings, but in scheduling for special students. The counselor believes that the law is being "overimplemented" regarding mainstreaming, that many children are inappropriately placed in regular classes. While all of the EMR-LD students take regular physical education, considerably fewer are mainstreamed for other electives and only three attend a regular academic class. The TMR students are also mainstreamed for PE and a few for art. There is little communication between regular and special teachers.

The regular teachers are divided regarding the advisability of mainstreaming. Some thought that those who could handle regular classes should be in them for the academic and social benefits. Several were adamantly opposed, claiming that the special education students were taunted and that the academic level of the good students was lowered by their presence.

Comparison

The differences in performance among the junior high schools are subtle and small. From the program that is common to all three schools, the EMR-LD class, similar degrees of non-academic mainstreaming occur: virtually all of the students from these classes take regular physical education and an elective, usually art. More variety exists among levels of academic mainstreaming: while slightly over half of the EMR-LD students in schools A and B attend some regular classes, only about 20% of those in school C do so. Only in school A, however, is the substantial degree of mainstreaming accompanied by widespread support of the practice by the regular teachers involved.

The team organization of school A facilitates communication among groups of teachers by assigning them responsibility for a common group of students. In addition, a great deal of decision-making has been delegated to the faculty through the mini-schools headed by lead teachers. The structure of the school thus encourages a degree of professional interaction that is unusual in secondary schools. The special education teachers no doubt benefit from this pattern of communication among regular teachers. At least equally important, however, is their own initiation in establishing consultative relationships concerning mainstreamed students. These two characteristics set this school apart from the others.

In schools B and C, there is little interaction among teachers outside of their departments, nor do the special class teachers make a consistent effort to discuss mainstreaming with other teachers beforehand or to provide assistance after the placement is made. As a result, many teachers believe that it is in no one's best interest, and mainstreamed students are frequently unsuccessful.

Senior High Schools

High school A is one of the largest secondary schools in the state, with an enrollment of 2,800 students. It has an extremely diversified curriculum with courses ranging from such esoteric concerns as advanced Russian, medical Greek, and aerospace to such practical considerations as cartography, aircraft mechanics, and climate control. This vast array of courses is offered by a faculty and support staff of over 150 and is overseen by a full-time coordinator of program and staff.

The immediate neighborhood is largely middle class, but the official zone encompasses almost a quarter of the county, with students from every conceivable demographic category. The school population is about 25% black. The school has a large special education population of about 140 EMR students, of whom approximately 60% are black. In addition to the EMR group, the school, on its own initiative, worked out an arrangement with a nearby residential school for the blind to take 14 college-bound blind students in order to give them a mainstreaming experience.

The school is directed by an executive principal. He understands his primary role to be to project a favorable image of the school to students, teachers, parents, and the general community and he excels in the role. He has a comprehensive knowledge of 94-142 and its operation in the school.

The principal manages this exceedingly large organization by means of delegated authority and clearcut accountability. One special education teacher described him as a masterful delegator who had almost delegated himself out of a position. However, it seems clear that if the organization is to continue to operate as smoothly as it appears to, the principal is needed to assure that those responsible are held accountable.

The total school is divided into four small schools--north, south, east, and west--each with approximately 700 students and its own small school principal. The faculty are evenly divided among the small schools and work on a day-to-day basis with the small school principal to whom they are assigned. All students, including special education students, are assigned to homerooms alphabetically throughout the four schools. All special education teachers are assigned to the north school--apparently a carryover from the days when all special education classes were grouped around one classroom complex. The special education classes are more dispersed now, with only half of them in this classroom complex. Plans for next year include further dispersal of the special education rooms as far away from this location as possible.

In January of 1980 a new department head was appointed for special education. She heads a total staff of six special education teachers and a special vocational teacher who teaches most subject matter areas for special education students. All of these students are assigned to home rooms alphabetically with other students.

The principal claims, and most regular teachers report, that special education has never been isolated. Except for the somewhat greater separation of the special classrooms in the past, there has been considerable mainstreaming and special education students have always been in regular home rooms. The principal suggests that the school developed at the same time as the enactment of state and federal laws for the handicapped and therefore they have always been in compliance with little or no adjustment to their original program. He feels that the highly diverse population makes the special education students seem less special because they are just another type among many varieties of students. Teachers unable to tolerate diversity would not prosper long in such an environment. Seventy percent of the special education students are mainstreamed to some part of the regular program in addition to physical education.

In spite of the already appreciable mainstreaming, plans are underway which will permit even more mainstreaming next year. The department head will spend three periods a day serving as a resource teacher, going around to the regular classes helping teachers who have special education students, giving special tutoring to the students, etc. It is thought that this will allow even more students to be mainstreamed successfully. At least 28 regular teachers have already agreed to take special education students for next year. These plans were developed by the special education department, under the leadership of the new department head, but all special education teachers report that the administration has been receptive to and supportive of the proposed changes.

Although the overall program and its relation to the regular program have thus far changed very little with the change in special education leadership, the internal style of the department has apparently changed considerably. The former head made most decisions herself with little regard for the participation of other department members. The new department head, on the other hand, is very consultative and makes her colleagues feel very much a part of all departmental decisions. In spite of this difference in style, however, the regular teachers perceive considerable continuity in the conduct of the special education program.

Regular teachers are usually receptive to taking special education students, probably because of the careful approach to mainstreaming on the part of the special education department. This receptivity stems directly from the high rate of success that special students have had in regular classes. That high rate of success, in turn, is the result of very careful and conscientious mainstreaming on the part of the department. Students are mainstreamed to situations in which they are highly likely to succeed. Regular teachers are always approached about their willingness to take special students in advance of placement. Because student abilities are carefully matched with the mainstream placement, special education students are likely to do well and to cause little added stress on the regular teachers. Most special education students are mainstreamed to vocational courses in addition to art, music, general math, and creative writing. The non-vocational regular teachers as well as the vocational teachers report a high rate of success with students from the special education program and the special education program enjoys considerable goodwill among regular teachers.

High school B, located near a prosperous residential district, has traditionally been an "academy" of the school system; in past years, as many as 90% of its graduates went on to four-year colleges. It is now a comprehensive school offering a full range of both academic and vocational courses to 1,100 students. In addition, it has become one of the system's bilingual education centers, providing instruction to about 50 non-English-speaking students.

Special education is also relatively new to the school, having been introduced in 1977-78. The program consists of two EMR teachers for 28 students and two special teachers for 14 severely hearing-impaired students. A resource room teacher was originally included, but this position was lost after the first year; nor is there a special vocational preparation teacher as there are in the other two high schools.

The principal, new this year, is the school's third in three years. He has apparently been overwhelmed by a residue of administrative problems that he inherited due to the recent high turnover in leadership. Nevertheless, administrative support for special education is evident. The principal is seen as supportive of 94-142: one special education teacher says that he has done much to integrate the special education teachers with the rest of the faculty; the other praises him for making special efforts to visit special education students. One of the assistant principals is particularly committed to supporting special education, and the ninth and tenth grade guidance counselor worked to bring special education to the school.

The deaf students remain in a self-contained class most of the time because of the limited availability of sign-language translators to accompany them to regular classes. The EMR students are assigned to regular homerooms and physical education classes. At the beginning of the school year, all of them were placed in at least one other regular class. Most often the classes were music, horticulture, or home economics, but a few students were placed in math, science, or social studies classes. Only half of the students managed to stay in these classes with passing grades.

A great deal of resentment over this experience was reported by regular teachers. Many stated that the EMR students were simply unable to keep up with the work; these teachers were unwilling or unable to provide additional help or to modify their requirements. Even those who are willing to make such accommodations, however, report a near-total lack of consultation or follow-up from special education teachers. The school psychologist concurs that there is little communication about, or planning for, mainstreaming. Students are simply scheduled into regular classes on the basis of convenience, without trying to match the placement to the individual's strengths and weaknesses.

The opportunities of special education teachers to improve the situation are limited by the loss of the resource room teacher. They are also teaching groups of regular students with reading and math problems. Thus their time for assisting regular teachers and mainstreamed students is limited.

High school C is one of the system's few remaining inner city high schools. Nearly all of its 1,300 ninth through twelfth graders, over half of whom are black, walk to school from two large housing projects and the older residential neighborhoods that surround the school. Its two buildings are old and frequently vandalized with broken windows and graffiti-covered walls. Indications of the problems that beset the school are found in the following figures: 1) it has one of the lowest average daily attendance rates in the system, about 75%; 2) of an entering freshman class, only 50-60% are expected to graduate; 3) about 15% of its graduates attend college.

The curricular offerings at the school stand in sharp contrast to those of the comprehensive high schools. There are a limited range of academic subjects, the standard electives, and vocational instruction in office work, building trades and auto mechanics.

The school has long been a special education center, having housed as many as seven EMR classes to which students were bused from other school zones. Four such classes now remain, following the policy of dispersing classes among more schools. Each special education teacher has a home room of 10 to 15 students (about one-fourth of the special education students dropped out of school in 1979-80). The students change classes within the special education department, and about half of them are mainstreamed for non-academic subjects such as home economics and industrial arts. In addition, a special vocational teacher works with special education seniors on job preparation and job-seeking skills.

The principal came to the school a year and a half ago. He has held a number of administrative posts in other high schools and has been a candidate for higher administrative positions. He is viewed by faculty members as a capable administrator, but the prevailing attitude is one of grudging admiration rather than genuinely high esteem. Most teachers were very defensive and guarded in discussing him, and several refused to answer questions about him. His involvement in school district and community activities requires his frequent absence from the school. Teachers report that they rarely see him in their classrooms.

He thinks it important to foster a sense of "ownership" of new ideas at the grass roots, and seeks suggestions from teachers on how to carry out new policies. However, he exercises considerable control over the extent of faculty participation. One teacher who had served recently on a faculty committee said that the principal governed the group's work so closely and vetoed their recommendations so often that they simply gave up trying to present their own ideas.

The principal sees the bolstering of students' and teachers' self-esteem as an important part of his job. To this end, he spends a great deal of time on activities and symbolic gestures aimed at making people "feel good about themselves" and "letting everyone know they're doing a good job." These efforts are manifestations of an educational philosophy that posits that improved learning will flow from improved self-esteem. Teachers complain, however, that the principal has initiated so many non-academic assemblies and field trips that their instructional time has suffered.

The principal is well-informed about P. L. 94-142, supports it, and sees it as compatible with his own belief that schools should accommodate the individual differences of students to the greatest possible extent. As yet, he has had little discernible impact on the traditionally segregated special education program at the school. He described two changes he has made that were designed to reduce the separate status of special education: 1) the special education homerooms are now designated by grade level; 2) the special education teachers are now identified by subject matter. These changes, however, have no real substance. Special education students are in separate homerooms regardless of what they are called. Their teachers function almost exclusively as a special education department and not as members of subject matter departments. Until this year, the special education department head, not the guidance counselors, kept the students' records; the department still does its own scheduling.

It is not surprising that perceptions of special education as a separate entity remain strong; most of the regular teachers interviewed commented on this. Special education teachers have virtually no contact with the rest of the faculty, with the exception of the department head who monitors some mainstreamed students. School-level efforts to implement 94-142 are of low salience to almost everyone. Few teachers perceive anyone in the school as a leader on this policy, and few recall anything specific that has been done to implement the law in the school.

Gradual change has occurred, however, over the past 5 or 6 years. The school psychologist and others report that regular teachers are more open to mainstreaming than they used to be, and the interviews with teachers support this claim. For the relatively few newly-referred students, special education is now more likely to be used as a part-time resource than as a self-contained placement. In addition, the official social segregation of special education students has been largely eliminated; previous policies of separate lunch hours and seating at school assemblies are no longer observed. These changes began before implementation of the federal law, in part at the urging of the psychologist.

The special education teachers, while anxious to remove social barriers for their students, remain very protective of them in terms of expected performance. The vocational teacher finds that the defeatist attitudes of students are reinforced by the teachers' explicitly low expectations. The students are often told that they do not have to attempt any work if they don't want to.

Students are placed in regular classes only when it is expected that they are ready to do the work. Teachers are not asked to change their grading standards, although some do this anyway. (Overall achievement levels in this school are very low.) Some teachers report a high level of success with mainstreamed students, while others indicate that severe reading problems limit their ability to function even in non-academic classes. Many teachers, however, apparently have special education students in their classes without knowing about them. This practice, initiated by the principal, has perhaps made mainstreaming less of an effort for special education teachers, but as a result, there is no consultation with regular teachers about the "invisible" special students.

Comparison

As in the junior high schools, administrative leadership is not a dominant factor in the implementation of 94-142 in the senior high schools. While the principals of all three schools are knowledgeable about and supportive of the law, none of them are perceived as initiators of specific activities regarding it. Nor are the guidance counselors major actors in this area; they are the keepers of students' schedules but are not involved in decisions about special education students. Rather, they rely on the special education teachers to decide what is appropriate. The ways in which the special education departments make and implement these decisions is the major difference among the three schools which accounts for their different levels of mainstreaming and of its acceptance and perceived success by regular teachers.

In school A, which mainstreams the highest proportion of its EMR students, the head of the special education department assumes responsibility for placement of students in regular classes as a major part of her role. She is very conscious of the need to make each mainstreaming decision individually, to consult with the regular teachers in advance, and to monitor each mainstreamed student. There are few reports in this school by regular faculty members who feel they have special students who are inappropriately placed or who are opposed to having such students in their classes in the future.

The special education teachers in school B have taken a less careful and individualized approach to mainstreaming. They decided on principle that all of their students should attend some regular classes, but half of them were unable to stay in the selected classes. Many of the regular teachers involved felt that they, as well as the students, were placed in a "sink or swim" situation for which both were unprepared. The special education teachers clearly felt that they were acting in the best interest of their students and in compatibility with the law. They failed, however, to establish communication that could have made the mainstreaming experience more palatable to regular teachers and paved the way for future special education students.

The special education department of school C is also characterized by the lack of a consciously adopted strategy for mainstreaming. There is little consultation with regular teachers about mainstreamed students, whether teachers are informed that they have a special education student in their class or not. The special education department's long history of almost total segregation from the rest of the school has been slow to change. This heritage continues to affect the department's interaction with other faculty members and their protective attitude toward their students. Some change has occurred and will no doubt continue, but the department head has not assumed a leadership role in this process as has her counterpart in school A.

Historical and contextual circumstances have contributed to the success of special education initiatives in the other two high schools as well. The program in school A has not had to overcome a tradition of separation in part simply because the school and its special education program did not exist when separation was the norm. In addition, the faculty share a sense of the school's role as a model for innovation in all areas of education. The newness of special education in school B, on the other hand, was a disadvantage for mainstreaming because of the school's almost exclusive emphasis on college preparation in the past. Many of the faculty members continue to value this priority. In this context, the special education teachers would probably have met less resistance with a selective strategy than with their wholesale approach to mainstreaming.

The fact that each of the three special education departments has faced a different situation, however, does not reduce the importance of their adoption of different ways of dealing with the circumstances they confront. The appropriateness of their mainstreaming strategies remains the controlling factor in its prevalence and acceptance.

Secondary Schools and Organizational Factors Influencing Implementation

The differences in implementation between elementary and secondary schools indicate the extent to which implementation processes are dependent upon organizational settings. In broad categorical terms, the important factors in each setting are the same: leadership matters; teacher relationships matter; program characteristics matter. In detail, however, the precise meaning and operation of these organizational factors differ from setting to setting.

Elementary schools were described as communities and secondary schools as bureaucracies, with the maximum contrast existing between elementary schools at one extreme and senior high schools at the other pole. Clearly, elementary schools have many bureaucratic characteristics, as elementary teachers are quick to point out; and it is difficult to imagine any school, senior high or otherwise, without some characteristics of a community. Nonetheless, these characteristics combine differently in the different settings, so that the variables must be reexamined in terms of the setting in which they appear.

The leadership styles of principals in elementary schools influenced implementation of P. L. 94-142. However, the context of leadership in secondary schools is different from that of the elementary school. Principals in secondary schools oversee a complex of separate departments and department heads with set responsibilities. Roles are more highly differentiated and specialized than they are in elementary schools. Therefore, there are more formal leadership roles in secondary schools. Those leadership positions closest to the actual delivery of services in secondary schools seem to exert more influence over the implementation of 94-142 than the more distant leadership of the principal. In the high performing high school, it was the special education department head whose leadership seemed to make the difference. Encouragement or at least cooperation from the principal was undoubtedly a prerequisite for that teacher's efforts, but the leadership initiative was exerted by that teacher. Bureaucratization makes it possible to deal with the size and complexity of secondary schools, but it may also constrain and limit the effects of leadership from the top.

Many of the same factors that alter the context of leadership in secondary schools affect the context of teacher interaction as well. Departmental lines provide a natural separation between groups of teachers, and daily routines may seldom require that those lines be crossed. Most professional interactions take place among members of a specific department. Special education is also departmentalized in high schools, and mainstreaming of special education students requires negotiations across departmental lines.

Program structure also takes on a somewhat different meaning in secondary schools. The organization of instruction is uniform among secondary schools, but the richness of course offerings among high schools varies greatly. The large comprehensive high schools have more curricular variety than the smaller ones. The greater number of vocational courses and other electives in some schools increases opportunities for mainstreaming handicapped students into settings in which they are likely to succeed.

In many respects, junior high schools are less flexible than either elementary schools or high schools. Responsibilities are divided according to subject matter, and therefore no single teacher is responsible for the total programs of individual students, making adjustments in individual programs more difficult. Junior high schools also lack the wide variety of vocational and elective courses available in many high schools. The higher performing junior high school in this study created more flexibility in its program by organizing instruction around grade-level teams. That added flexibility accounts for its greater mainstreaming success among the three junior high schools studied.

When the organizational differences between elementary schools and secondary schools are added to the differences in their special education populations and the different practices of special education, the results are two very different implementation settings. Some of these differences could be reduced or eliminated if the school system were to increase special education services at the secondary level to more nearly parallel those at the elementary level. Those differences resulting from organizational factors, however, would remain as influences on the implementation of P. L. 94-142.

CHAPTER 6

Pictures of the Future

Every governmental program is a manifestation of a "theory" about reality. Such theories have both normative and empirical dimensions. Thus, it is assumed to be a good thing to integrate handicapped children with the activities of their peers. It is regarded as good because Americans believe in the essential equality of persons. No one should be set apart. These normative aspirations are accompanied by empirical expectations. It is predicted that handicapped children will think better of themselves and achieve more if they are taught in regular schools and classroom settings. If experience proves this false, then the normative and empirical parts of the theory would be in conflict and a reconsideration of policy might occur.

The validity of the empirical assumptions in a social policy about strategies of treatment and service will significantly affect the implementation of that policy. For example, if many mildly handicapped children actually appear to suffer academically from mainstreaming, that knowledge would become a powerful inhibition on the implementatin of aspects of the least restrictive environment provision of the regulations. The ease or difficulty of implementation thus follows, in part, from assumptions about the efficacy of prescribed treatments.

But there are also assumptions with any policy theory about the institutional tasks of implementation themselves. The language of 94-142 assumes that schools will be able to institutionalize the practice of developing and using educational plans for individual students in a manner that rescues individuality from bureaucratic labeling and processing. Such assumptions may or may not be warranted. But they are different in kind from empirical assumptions about the efficacy of prescribed treatments. If it is found that the recommended treatments do not work as hoped even under conditions of optimal implementation, then the policy is in trouble. But it is a different kind of finding to suggest that it is difficult for schools to develop optimal conditions for implementation.

The first finding, about the efficacy or inefficacy of treatment, is a moment of truth. The prescription and the theory from which it is drawn either work or do not work. Of course, findings about outcomes are seldom so crystal clear. The second kind of finding is predictably provisional and admits the possibility of manipulation of conditions to gain improvement. The sticky problem is that implementation failures may prevent the theory about treatment from ever being put to the test and implementation problems may be insoluble.

This book has not focused on the validity of the theory about values and treatment which guides 94-142. Rather, attention has been trained on instrumental questions of whether the law can be implemented. In that sense, we have asked about the validity of the assumptions about implementation which flow from the statute and have guided the regulations. We have discovered shaky assumptions about implementation. The central question is whether experience can be used as a guide to the improvement of implementation so that the core theory, about values and treatments, can be put to the test.

If a law and subsequent regulations are well written, a policy can then be assessed for its efficacy. If they are not well written, the issues become clouded with controversies about implementation rather than purpose and substance. What is meant by well written and how does 94-142 measure up?

The legislative process which produced 94-142 did not attempt to specify or prescribe treatments beyond the assumption that all children would benefit from education. Judgments about the appropriate treatments for individual children were to be reached through mandated procedures, which became the basis for the regulations:

1. The child find/referral process
2. The least restrictive environment presumption
3. Staffing procedures leading to placement and the preparation of an IEP.

The sponsors and proponents of 94-142 did not prepare implementation estimates to assess whether most school districts were institutionally capable of implementing the requirements of 94-142.[1] There is very little incentive for either the supporters or the opponents of a measure to call for such estimates. The supporters do not wish to suggest that there might be difficulties and opponents see nothing but trouble. Policy analysis, as practiced in government, slights institutional questions and gives primary attention to the projected economic costs and benefits of policies. The helping professions of education, medicine, and social work are not trained to be analytical about policies in regard to either economic or institutional questions. Therefore, in this instance as in so many others, implementation was regarded by Congress and the federal bureaucracy as a matter of legal compliance.

But as we have discovered, compliance is difficult and certainly not automatic and, if one extends the concept to include thoroughgoing implementation in the spirit of the law, the question of the capacities of school districts to go so far becomes a very open one. Before we address the question of whether the law asks too much of school systems, we will review our own findings about the school system and compare them to similar research. The following statements are descriptive and do not assess the institutional capacity to act.

Child Find/Referral

1. There was not enough money to cover all expenses so child find for children from ages zero to five has been neglected by the school district.

2. The referral process within elementary schools varies greatly according to school climate.

3. It is difficult for district administrators to assess the performance of particular schools because circumstances differ, standard instruments for comparative evaluation do not exist, it is difficult for any outsider to fully understand a school and judgments about the quality of any referral process are inherently elusive.

4. School administrators were reluctant to provide funds to reduce waiting lists and increase the number of psychologists required by the increase in referrals.

The two central implementation problems here are money and administrative difficulty. Most 94-142 and state funds were committed by the school system to the severely handicapped children. This was in accordance with both federal and state laws which gave such children priority. The provision of increased services to mildly handicapped children was thus dependent on regular budgets and the result was half a loaf. This is ultimately a political question. The assessment of the sufficiency of referral practices is a murkier matter. A clear and replicable method of assessment is not available.

Provision of Services in the Least Restrictive Environment

1. The mainstreaming of mildly handicapped children to regular schools is virtually complete. This trend preceded the passage of both state and federal law and reflects the dominant values in the school system among both special and general administrators.

2. The placement of mildly handicapped children in classrooms which provide the services they individually require has been constrained by an insufficient number of special teachers and classrooms. Many special teachers are required by necessity to deal with a greater variety of children than their education has prepared them for.

This implementation difficulty has become tangled with a controversial question of treatment strategy. The decategorization of services for children previously labeled LD and EMR could be a response to the organizational necessity of placement within the constraints of resources. Or, it could be an appropriate step toward individuation in education.

3. There has been virtually no invention in the provision of services for handicapped students in secondary schools.

This is certainly a question of money, but there is little evidence of imaginative thinking about preparation of the handicapped for future jobs. Neither academic nor vocational education teachers are interested. Secondary special education teachers on the whole appear to lack resources, leverage and imagination.

School system administrators have not given priority to this problem because, like child find for preschool children, it is not central to what they have assumed to be their responsibilities. Historically, the link between schools and the world of work has been weak.

4. Few, if any, incentives have been offered to regular elementary teachers to accept mainstreamed handicapped children in their classes. This is in large part due to lack of funds for aides and inability to reduce the size of classes.

5. Careful decisions are made about whether to place or keep handicapped children in regular elementary classes but different schools appear to treat similar children in different ways as a result of differing school climates and philosophies. This is like the variability seen in referrals. The same difficulty of external assessment of performance holds as well.

6. Mainstreaming is facilitated within schools in which there are regular patterns of communication and cooperation among regular and special teachers. The difficulty for implementation is that external administrators cannot simply create such an atmosphere by fiat. The appropriate means are, in fact, elusive.

The general conclusion about implementation difficulties to be drawn from these propositions is that even if resources for full and sufficient services were made available, which is not the case, it is very hard to devise good strategies for treatment or evaluate such efforts.

Staffings and Individualized Education Programs

1. The law calls for collegiality in assessment and placement decisions in the referral and evaluation process and the degree of such collegiality is a manifestation of school climate.

2. The degree of parental participation in the staffing process varies positively with the degree of collegiality.

3. The IEP plays a mechanical role in compliance with the law. The

mere preparation of an IEP is no guarantee of skillful or appropriate teaching. In fact, there is little evidence that IEPs are used extensively as guides to instruction. They reflect the intentions and perceptions of teachers toward individual students and we may assume that these vary greatly in quality.

4. The continuous reevaluation of students has been given a low priority because of the costs in time and staff resources.

The leading theme which emerges from the foregoing propositions is the great difficulty of knowing whether compliance with a prescribed formal process is in any way related to the quality of that process. There clearly is no guarantee to that effect.

The School District

1. The school system is organized for routine administration through regular channels. Special programs requiring extraordinary oversight and coordination are difficult to mount.

There were three different manifestations of this proposition. The three districts were separate from each other and the special education department, while involved with each one, had leverage over none. Leadership down the chain of command of instructional questions was exercised by persuasion rather than edict and permitted great variability among schools in their instructional styles. This bureaucracy could have been mobilized for extraordinary and concerted action on 94-142--but why that measure and not all the other pressing matters at hand? No bureaucracy can be in a state of continuous alert on all the programs it administers. It is not clear that 94-142 was any more pressing a priority than Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of planning for a new round of school desegregation. Finally, even if the school department had been organized as a unified, authoritative hierarchy in which regular and special education were fully integrated and which faced only one major problem, 94-142, the cognitive difficulties of oversight and evaluation of performance by schools on 94-142 were immense.

The convergence of these three factors explains the ad hoc and disjointed nature of the process of implementation of the law and the great latitude afforded individual schools.

2. Because of constraints on expenditures, school department officials had to choose which aspects of 94-142 would receive high priority. There was not enough money to do it all. School finances were very tight reflecting a running controversy between the mayor and the city council over taxes, with the mayor advocating increases and the council resisting. A compromise in 1980 left the school department little room to maneuver. The reduction in the number of school psychologists is one small sign of tight budgetary policies.

This explains the use of federal and state money for services to the severely handicapped. The law gave them priority, advocate groups were organized around severe handicaps, threats of advocate and parental litigation were primarily in this area and the money was available. The chief advocates for the cause of the mildly handicapped were special educators. They had little external support. Gains for these children therefore had to be within the existing framework and new teachers were added only when the threat of due process suits was used as an administrative spur to action.

3. There were strong disagreements throughout the school system about the proper strategies of treatment. Neither the law nor the professional community of special education provided definitive resolutions to such questions.

The central special education staff members gave their blessing to quite diverse modes of implementation in schools as long as they thought a principal was trying. Thus, the representative to district III approved of two elementary principals who could not have been more opposed in their approach to 94-142. The first was hostile to self-contained classes and labeling, and sought to keep children with problems in regular classes whenever possible. She was black and was particularly concerned with the effects of labeling on self-esteem. The second believed strongly in intensive work with special children in self-contained classes with minimal mainstreaming. She was white and articulated the values of a school and neighborhood committed to high academic achievement. Neither school received high marks on our comparative assessment of performance. But, the special educator who worked with the district believed that both were trying to do the right thing. The differences between these two principals were primarily about educational philosophy and neither the language of 94-142 nor research and demonstrations in special education could reach far enough to resolve such matters.

The same conclusion could be drawn about the disagreement with the central special education staff about whether it was wise to merge children previously labeled LD and EMR in a common CD category. One could cite chapter and verse of 94-142 and special education theory on either side of the case.

When neither law nor science can fully resolve issues of this kind, and this is usually the case, administrative discretion prevails. But the exercise of such discretion is seldom uniform in any organization, much less across a number of similar organizations.

The General Experience of 94-142

Our study is only one case but the findings match those of research on 22 diverse school districts conducted during the same period as our work by Stearns and colleagues.[2] A brief summary of their descriptive propositions makes this clear:

1. Training in school districts in advance of implementation was inadequate because it was directed primarily at special educators and not geared to the schools as entities. Regular teachers need help in their schools.

2. There was not enough money to pay for all aspects of the law; districts had to choose their priorities.

3. District-wide implementation strategies were ad hoc and uncoordinated.

4. There was a general increase in the referral of children for assessment but great variability in rates and patterns across schools.

5. Reevaluations of special students were given low importance because of the costs and already established priorities.

6. There was a gradual increase in mainstreaming in all districts but decisions were very much a reflection of school climate and varied accordingly.

7. Parents were passive in collegial staffings at which a variety of professionals were present as members of the M team. Parents are intimidated by such a heavy dose of professionalism in one setting.

This finding goes beyond our conclusions. We found that parents were more likely to be present if referral processes were collegial. But we did not observe staffings and cannot describe actual parental participation. Collegiality and parental attendance may be functions of effective school organization. But it may also be that professionalism and lay participation are antithetical values. Certainly, the insistence on both in 94-142 does not reflect an analytic awareness of a possible conflict.

8. New "boundary spanning" roles are emerging in schools to foster cooperation between regular and special teachers. These informal roles are usually filled by special teachers who know how to bring people together. Mainstreaming appears to take place with greater frequency when such persons are present.

9. Compliance does not equal implementation. It is one thing to set procedures in place and it is another to have them incorporated into school routines so that those routines are altered in the desired direction. The question of effectiveness is an even more distant matter.

Marian Stearns and her co-authors conclude that the implementation of the law should move into a new phase in which federal and state agencies put less emphasis on compliance monitoring and give greater attention to developing strategies and techniques for enhancing local institutional capacities for implementation.

What conclusions might one draw from the foregoing analysis about the inherent capacities of school districts across the nation to implement 94-142?

1. All the provisions of the law cannot be implemented without more money than is presently available. If the federal government does not

provide it, then states and localities will have to divert existing services to fulfill 94-142. It is unlikely that the latter will happen. In order to avoid the political backlash from the parents of regular children, school systems will stop at pro forma compliance with 94-142. Of course, if the courts are triggered by suits on behalf of special children and reenter the issue, the budgetary consequences are incalculable.

2. Federal and state compliance monitoring should be strong. Moral suasion and technical assistance are not enough to ensure implementation. But insistence on compliance with all provisions of an under-funded law is hypocritical. In fact, there will probably be considerable secret acquiescence at the top with practical reality.

3. The variability of implementation is very great according to school districts and to schools within districts. There is no obvious hierarchical administrative remedy for this shortcoming.

4. Hopes for genuine parental participation in decision processes about children were overly optimistic. The law is based on the belief in the desirability of an ecological approach in which the child's family, home setting and situation are considered in decisions about educational programs. The staff resources and time to cast such ecological nets across the worlds of children are not available and schools and school people have never been given to such propensities. They like to erect invisible walls between themselves and parents.

5. The main procedural provisions of the law can be implemented in school districts in that:

a. Almost all children can be placed in an educational setting.

b. Processes for referral, staffing and placement can be set in place.

c. New educational possibilities can be created for children through new kinds of placements and the use of IEPs.

But, there are at least two very great limitations to such a formal response. First, many children will still be missed altogether or they will be dealt with mechanically. Second, optimal treatment in the spirit of the law will be very uneven between and within school systems.

Formal compliance with varying qualitative responses is about all that can be expected from an under-funded program in a continental federal system in which the real power to decide is in grass roots institutions. The question then becomes how to gradually enhance local institutional capacities and improve the quality of service over the long haul, with full recognition that progress will be slow and difficult to achieve.

Before we address that question, it would be useful to ask if 94-142 suffers from serious legal or political limitations which would prevent the strategy of incremental improvement from working.

First, is the statute written with clarity and specificity so that implementation agencies know what they are to do? Theodore Lowi calls for "juridical democracy" which he defines as "the rule of law operating in institutions.[3]" He opposes blanket grants of operational authority and discretion by legislatures to administrators in which a program is defined through the political and bureaucratic bargaining which accompany implementation. By his rights, if the statute does not or cannot clearly state the steps necessary to carry out the program, there should not be a program because it will be impossible to hold anyone accountable for what happens. If the law is clear and the program fails, then the law can be challenged. The search for scapegoats is avoided.

P. L. 94-142 is a clear and precise statute which meets Lowi's standards. The specificity of the statute permitted a high correspondence between its language and that of the regulations. The specificity of the law makes it possible to amend its parts in response to experience. There is no guarantee that a clear statute will express a valid theory about either treatment or implementation. But the validity of theory can be judged by matching experience to the language of the law. This is probably how 94-142 will be assessed and revised.

There is a more difficult political question which cannot be resolved within the scope of this study. This is the kind of issue raised by Peter Schuck who regards much social regulation as symbolic in nature.[4] A law is passed because no one opposes it. The appeal is a non-zero sum, one in which a new benefit is conferred without losses to anyone. This strategy serves the short-term electoral incentives of members of Congress. But, in fact, someone will lose as others gain because resources are limited and choices must be made among priorities. Such ambiguities are passed along by Congress to the implementing agency which, in turn, denies the problem and passes the buck downward in the intergovernmental chain. The law is never fully implemented but federal rhetoric disguises the fact. Local discretion leads to a multiplicity of responses and an absence of coherent implementation strategies.

It is too soon to say if 94-142 is a policy of this kind. One would require much more extensive knowledge of federal and state implementing actions than is now available to make a judgment. There are allegations that the federal office of special education and many of the states are dragging their feet on implemenation. But we are inclined to believe that 94-142 is not a purely symbolic regulatory measure. In fact, there is ample evidence that new services are being delivered to children in a greater variety of settings than before. While the law has symbolic trappings, it resembles Title I of ESEA in that it can be implemented if the formal system of enforcement is supplemented by several informal systems which grow out of enforcement activities.[5]

In the remainder of this chapter, we will assume this to be the case and return to the question of how to enhance incremental improvement of implementation. We assume that effective implementation is the first necessary step toward the long-term assessment of the efficacy of treatment. We also assume that discovery of both new possibilities and problems of implementation will affect ideas about treatment. For example, the creation of boundary spanning roles enhances mainstreaming. And on the other side, the experience with parental participation may limit aspirations. The history of any reform is never linear. Rather, the survival and growth of a program requires continuous, iterative communication between policy and service levels. We have organized this research project to reflect that principle and see our research problems as operational and policy problems as well.

The Federal Role

Throughout this volume, we have engaged in an oblique search for the most fruitful federal role for the implementation of 94-142. The point of departure has been to discover the bureaucratic routines which are necessary at the grass roots and then assess present and future federal strategies which nurture or impede the development of such routines. The following strategies are suggested as likely to nurture constructive forces in schools:

1. Compliance enforcement is a critical activity in the first years of a program because grass roots actors can invoke formal rules as a device to create and strengthen the informal norms necessary to sustain implementation.

It is not that the top of the hierarchy commands and the bottom automatically responds. Paul Hill has pointed out how state and local officials who are charged with the implementation of Title I of ESEA have invoked regulation as levers to foster new routines. The initiative comes from below and regulations are not self-enforcing.[6] We saw a very nice example of this in the actions of the chief psychologist who used the legal requirement of student reevaluations as a weapon to try to force an increase in his staff. If the rule had not been there, he could not have invoked it. This is a good illustration of Lowi's dictum that rules must be precise. But it was he who took the initiative, not a federal or state official.

However, after an indeterminate period of time, local routines are established and compliance recedes as an issue in favor of inquiry about effective service delivery. The strategies below address that issue.

2. Research and evaluation are singularly appropriate federal roles. Only the federal government can sponsor research and organize its utilization. And a national program must be evaluated from a national perspective. But there is a catch. Both research and evaluation must take account of the dynamics of implementation if they are to be effectively designed and to be eventually utilized by those in the field.

Robert Mattson and Clarence Townsend are very critical of the preponderance of federal support for research in special education which has emphasized intensive work with children in rarefied university settings.[7] They argue that optimistic findings from such research in carefully controlled settings were the principal buttresses for the reform movement which led to 94-142. Both courts and legislators were told only the bright side. It was not pointed out that these findings were derived from artificial settings and therefore might not be duplicated in ordinary schools. This stricture applies primarily to the severely handicapped but his general conclusion is more broadly applicable. Federally supported research has not fostered enough experiments conducted in ordinary settings. We have technology but no contextual knowledge about is application.

Given this perspective, research and evaluation are clearly complementary because evaluation will show how intervention strategies developed by research actually work in schools. In an ideal world, such findings would influence research planning so that treatments in schools would be studied. In facc, in such a world, it might be difficult to distinguish research on treatment from evaluation because experiments would be conducted in schools rather than laboratories.

The federal strategy for the evaluation of 94-142 intelligently assumes stages in the implementation of the program and calls for a type of evaluation appropriate to each stage. The first questions to be answered are: Who are the beneficiaries? What services are they receiving in what settings, and through what administrative mechanisms? How well is the intent of the law being met? What are the consequences of implementation?

Thomas Glennan and Sue Berryman point out that this schedule of questions permits federal officials to respond to implementation difficulties as they arise.[8] However, these evaluation plans reflect the world of the federal administrator who wishes to know what rules can be changed and what levers pulled to put a national program in place. This perspective is not often sensitive to the positive and negative relations of the administrative procedures for compliance to treatment strategies. Nor is there much concern about measuring outcomes for those served. The primary task of the federal manager is to put a program in place and be accountable for its efficient management.

Far too much federally sponsored evaluation research is based on the assumption that programs are organized as experiments and can be studied in terms of the relation of input to outcome. This belief, which is the mark of the social scientist uncontaminated by the confusion of the real world, completely overlooks the relationship between implementation and the evaluation of outcomes. Unless a program is actually put to work in a specific place, evaluation does not get a fair shake. Therefore, evaluation research should seek to capture both the processes and results of programs in a continually rolling and iterative fashion so that findings can be incorporated into program administration.[9]

This book points the way for the next stage of evaluation and administration of 94-142. Current federal evaluation plans deal only with compliance questions. This is the chief concern of federal managers. Once there is satisfaction that the mechanisms for compliance are generally in place, attention should be turned to the relationships between compliance strategies and actual implementation. The third stage of research would explore results for children in relation to all of the foregoing institutional forces.

3. Administrative strategies should change in the second stage of implementation. Compliance becomes less important than understanding how to

foster organizational forces conducive to implementation at the grass roots. Federal regulation should be conceived as an instrument to strengthen local incentives to promote implementation.

Mark Yudoff has applied Richard Elmore's organizational models of program implementation to Supreme Court strategies in implementing court decisions on behalf of racial desegregation in schools.[10] The two models employed are systems management, which is the direction of a chain of command through a hierarchy, and organizational development, which is the creation of participation within bureaucracies conducive to the incorporation of mandated tasks into everyday routines.[11] Yudoff argues that the Supreme Court relied on organizational development in the 1950s for the implementation of the 1954 Brown v. the Board of Education decision. They assumed that desegregation could be achieved in the South only through processes of consensus and accommodation within southern communities and school systems. They were wrong; very little happened. The federal courts developed a systems management strategy in response to the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Title VI of that Act permitted the withholding of federal funds from school districts which failed to desegregate; and the passage of ESEA in 1965, which provided sorely needed federal funds for southern schools, gave teeth to Title VI. The federal courts worked in concert with the Department of Justice and the Office for Civil Rights to direct the implementation of desegregation. The strategy worked to a very great extent.

However, Yudoff also argues that such a top-down compliance strategy is not effective for the "second generation" problems of school desegregation such as bilingual education, tracking, disciplinary policies, compensatory education, and teacher transfer and tenure. As soon as one moves beyond a narrow view of desegregation--as compliance with a dictum for racially mixed student bodies and faculty in the direction of promoting education in such settings--the systems management approach is no help. In the Milliken II decision in 1977, the Supreme Court returned to a strategy of organizational development.[12] The court affirmed the importance of enlisting the aid of local school authorities in devising the most efficacious desegregation order for Detroit in a predominately black system in which rules for compliance were too blunt an instrument. Yudoff sees a good match between organizational development strategies and the loosely coupled nature of school systems in which considerable accommodation and consensus must be achieved before anything can be implemented.

He concludes that the federal courts must continue along two lines of implementation. Coercion is appropriate for the physical mixing of the races but the most productive path to improved education is to be found in organizational development. We have made the identical argument in regard to 94-142, and the logic is the same because the stages of implementation are identical. According to this line of reasoning, the question then becomes, what federal implementation strategies will promote implementation beyond formal compliance? What suggestions can be made on the basis of our study about federal strategies based upon such "backward mapping?"[13]

a. If the key to implementation lies in the culture of schools, then federally supported "training" for implementation should be conducted within schools and engage all those who work in them. One workshop in each school on practical problems of implementation will influence school climate more than a summer workshop for principals and a few teachers on the rules of compliance.

b. Since the structure of school districts inhibits the development of concerted implementation strategies, each school district should be asked to submit a plan for implementation which does more than repeat the chain of command and list mechanical steps. For example, if the shared responsibility between regular and special education breaks down over divided authority, what specific actions could be set out for joint planning and problem solving? The state agency could then assess an LEA in terms of its progress in overcoming such difficulties. Such oversight would provide a positive local incentive for organizational development.

c. Each school district could be required to develop a plan for evaluation of how well 94-142 has been implemented. This is different from assessing outcomes, which only a national sample of children and districts can achieve. But it would be most stimulating to school administrators if they were charged by federal regulations with developing methods of discovering how and why school A is ahead of school B on implementing 94-142.

d. Specific funds could be provided for rewarding teaching modes which foster implementation. For example, regular teachers who accept special students in their classes would receive tutoring help from special teachers for some of their own students. Reported student loads would be counted accordingly. Of course, one would not promulgate such an incentive system without secure knowledge that it would work. For example, would special teachers have any incentive to send their students to regular classes if they pick up a new student as a result?

e. Evaluation research on implementation which is based on national samples of schools and school districts can produce findings about the relation of professional and organizational incentives to implementation. Revision of regulations to appeal to incentives must be firmly grounded in research rather than anecdote or aspiration. In due course, findings about outcomes in relation to organizational factors will appear as well from the study of the achievements of children.

Regulations which appeal to incentives may be a more effective way to stimulate responsiveness at the grass roots than federal provisions of technical assistance in educational and organizational strategies. The former provide a stimulus by means of which local people stir around to find better ways of doing things. Federal technical assistance, through regional centers, may then have clear utility to them. But to provide the assistance without the goad is to have it ignored.

This is not a comprehensive list of possible federal strategies for the next stage of carrying out 94-142, but it points out the direction which we think such efforts should take.

The State Role

1. The primary role of the states in laws of this kind is to be the agents for federal implementation strategies.

By "laws of this kind" we mean statutes which are clear, precise and detailed about what is to be done. This is not to argue against a special revenue sharing program in employment and training like CETA which assigns responsibility to the states for developing good training programs within very broad federal guidelines. It is only to argue that a detailed law like 94-142 should be administered as a national program. It would be difficult to transform 94-142 into a special revenue sharing program because without specific injunctions, there would be no content or meaning, whereas, it is sufficient in CETA to call for training which will prepare the disadvantaged and the unemployed for job markets.[14]

2. The state education agency is able to use compliance procedures as instruments for fostering local organizational development.

Compliance monitoring, which is bureaucratic and rigid, will elicit a comparable response. But rigidity on the part of the states may be less of a problem than laxness. The failure to follow up problems or even to identify them can have political causes, but it can also be the inadvertent result of focusing solely on compliance. It does no good for a federal or state inspection team to point out lapses of implementation if local people do not know how to correct them. But if nothing is done, the critical agency has little recourse if its only instrument is compliance monitoring. Since it is very difficult politically to withhold funds as a sanction, the trouble is often ignored.

Therefore, it is very important that state agencies know how to stimulate planning and organizational development at the local level. This can be done through compliance monitoring of federal regulations which call for local organizational change. If districts must propose implementation and evaluation plans, the states must help. Technical assistance of this kind is surely more effective than help from regional federal research and development centers.

3. It should be the object of federal policy to strengthen the capacities of state agencies to play these catalytic roles with local school systems.

What is needed for 94-142 is something analogous to Title V of ESEA, in which federal funds are directed toward the development of policy planning capacities in state agencies. Jerome Murphy correctly points out that such activity is and should be policy analysis rather than "planning" because the latter is incompatible with the character of political bureaucracies.[15]

The organizational norms in schools supportive of Title I appear to be congenial to 94-142. This suggests that state agencies should pool several separate responsibilities, like oversight of Title I and 94-142, into one policy analysis activity which asks about the characteristics of the schools and districts which are conducive to the implementation of reform measures of this kind. Limited staff resources could be maximized.

The Local Role

This book has been about the local role. The descriptive chapters have set out our findings and it is time to place them in a theoretical context. One use of theory is its potential application to policy questions. The foregoing propositions about federal and state roles were theoretically attuned to what appears possible for those levels of government. We now need to return to the theoretical themes of Chapter 2 and apply them to our findings. The analytic vehicle will be Richard Elmore's four models of social program implementation. The following analysis explores possible leadership strategies derived from the assumptions of each model about how organizations work. We will then apply a composite strategy to our findings about 94-142.[16]

Systems Management

In this model, organizations are rational in that they efficiently seek to maximize clear goals. Responsibility for actions is delegated in an integrated fashion and monitored. Implementation is always goal directed and value maximizing.

The difficulty with the model is that it describes some types of organizations better than others. A commercial mail-order house fits the model very well for obvious reasons but a school system does not. Charles Bidwell amplifies the broad definition of "loose coupling" provided by Karl Weick to suggest that school systems have a very specific characteristic:

> Vertical control relationships form near-decomposable hierarchies, whereas, horizontal relationships display exceedingly low levels of interdependence.[17]

According to Bidwell, schools as instructional units are not strongly interdependent and therefore make little demand on central coordination or communicative capacity. Nonprofessional functions like transportation and finance are more strongly integrated laterally and this is reflected in a stronger central role. Vertical relations for instruction are so weak that only a minimal flow of information about teaching up and down the hierarchy is required.

However, administrators and teachers are responsive to and tightly coupled with their immediate, and different, external environments. School system administrators attend to the politics of school boards and state demands. Their principal task is to monitor the environment and secure political and financial resources for the system to do its work. Concern about instruction necessarily takes a back seat. Principals and teachers are responsive to the immediate environments of parents and neighborhoods.[18]

Thus, there is tight vertical coupling within a school system in regard to the disposition of resources derived from the larger, external political world and loose coupling as a successful adaptation to the need to be responsive to numerous small, local communities. This suggests that top school administrators and the people who actually work in schools live and work in very different worlds. The possibilities for systems management through a tightly coupled, vertical hierarchy are very limited on instructional matters although this is the norm and reality in regard to logistics.

Therefore, if central leaders are to exercise authority over instructional matters, they must do it from full awareness of weak, vertical links and the strong ties of schools to local settings. In short, they must learn how to influence grass roots administrators and teachers in terms of their perspectives and incentives rather than those presented by a "rational" management system.

We have ample evidence from Chapters 3, 4 and 5 that central school administrators delegated more than they managed. But there is also evidence that the middle managers worked through indirection to influence principals and teachers. They had to achieve goals by influencing others in terms of their perspectives.

Bureaucratic Process[19]

According to this model, the keys to the functioning of an organization are routine and discretion. Operating routines guide the organization but they are not uniform. Rather, different units develop different sets of routines and these are used as protective devices to resist coordination. Discretion exists because no routines can anticipate everything. But again, discretion is so decentralized and diffused that it is difficult to control. Organizational decisions tend to be incremental because changes in routines are resisted as threats to position. Change is secured when leaders persuade those below to replace old routines with new ones. Discretion is exercised within new guidelines. Such changes are most easily achieved when the new routines do not challenge those who must change and can be incorporated within their fundamental objectives. For example, one can persuade a regular teacher that her professional commitment includes the education of mildly handicapped children. But a special education teacher will very probably object to performing medical functions like putting a catheter in a severely handicapped child. Successful administrative leaders understand the tolerance of a system for change and the limits to that tolerance.[20]

Organizational Development[21]

This model is inspired by the "participation hypothesis" discussed in Chapter 2. Those who participate in decisions are more likely to implement them. Effective implementation depends upon the creation of constructive task-oriented groups in which the practical problems of implementation are worked out.

If the culture of schools could be changed so that principals exercised authoritative democratic leadership and teachers responded by assuming greater responsibility for cooperation with each other, the school system would have created the norms by which measures like 94-142, which require a great deal of cooperation, can be implemented. A mild strategy for moving in this direction is the introduction of workshops into individual schools for the discussion of innovation. It is possible that, at the very least, teachers would become more sensitive to and less afraid of new ideas and that discussion would foster cooperation. A more drastic strategy would be to create a new system of accountability in school systems in which individual schools, composed of principals and teachers together, would have explicit responsibility for instruction according to their own philosophies. Each school would be held accountable by central administrators for demonstrating the educational effectiveness of their approach.

This is appealing but if principals and teachers truly assumed responsibility for instruction and its results, they would probably be less responsive to a hierarchy and more responsive to their separate communities. This conclusion follows from Bidwell's notion of loose coupling within and tight coupling without. A coherent program could not be carried out in a school system under such conditions.

Besides, principals and teachers are very unlikely to wish to assume such responsibilities. No profession likes to be judged by outcomes. A doctor thinks no less of himself if the patient dies, or a lawyer if a case is lost. Prinicipals and teachers are much more vulnerable than these free-standing professionals. They seek the protective cover of school system bureaucracy and enjoy the exercise of discretion within the maze of unexamined routines.

Conflict and Bargaining[22]

According to this view, organizations are arenas for bureaucratic politics in which individuals and units clash over competing stakes and the distribution of influence is continually in flux. The task for central leaders is to build coalitions of support for their policies through bargaining. Bargains are struck in terms of mutual interests rather than any agreed conception of the general interest. The skills required are similar to those required for changing processes of bureaucratic routine. One must first discern how others in positions of independent influence perceive their stakes and then devise strategies to appeal to such interests. Internal conflicts within school systems are most often manifestations of more public politics encompassing school boards, elected officials, teachers' unions, and advocate groups.

Strategies of Leadership at the Local Level

It is apparent from the foregoing analyses that none of the four strategies or models of organizations is sufficient to the task of implementing a major policy like P. L. 94-142. A combination of approaches is required. The following analysis suggests how the different perspectives might be combined in unified strategies of leadership. We will weave a mosaic out of the positive aspects of each of the four models.

Organizational leaders must think in terms of systems management and exercise a central overview of instruction rather than delegating educational matters to the lowest level. There will be increasing demands for tighter control of educational performance by the public who are concerned with impending decline in the achievement of students. If anything, the trend favors greater emphasis on the three Rs rather than the kind of individuation described as necessary for 94-142.

The question is whether hierarchical systems management techniques will work to engender the kinds of school performance necessary for 94-142. Such techniques might work for performance accountability. For example, superintendents might hold schools responsible if test scores are low and a central team could be deployed to shake up and shape up the school.

If this is the trend of the future, it does not bode well for 94-142 because popular priorities are likely to favor general achievement as measured by tests rather than human development goals. Any effort to implement 94-142 by such ramrod methods would lead to bureaucratic responses for compliance with the letter rather than the spirit of the law. For example, if our 5.2% figure of the normal referral rate for handicapped children were to be used by school administrators as a quota to induce uniform compliance in all schools, children would become victims in a numbers game. Or, children could be mainstreamed, whether it is appropriate or not, for fear of administrative sanction on the LRE requirement.

We see here a real conflict within schools in the immediate future. The back-to-basics movement implies hierarchical management, and emphasis upon individual development implies decentralized management. Both sets of goals are legitimate and are likely to be given different priorities in different political eras.

We conclude that systems management, as it has been defined, is an inappropriate method for implementation of 94-142. This is not to suggest that an overview of the school system should be abandoned by top leaders. Rather, they require more subtle tools of leadership and should think in terms of steering rather than commanding.

The first rule of leadership in a complex public bureaucracy is that people must be persuaded to act in terms of an understanding of their own organizational incentives. If top leaders are to introduce new ideas, they must appeal to existing incentives if they are to be heeded. This is not to suggest that incentives cannot be restructured and therefore changed. One does not lead solely by following, but positive leadership must have as its point of departure knowledge of the incentives throughout the organization.

Therefore, we think steering is a better term than command to characterize the leadership of public bureaucracies. We recommended a type of steering which might be appropriate for 94-142, such as cross departmental teams of administrators, qualitative and quantitative comparative assessments of school performance and a general effort to look at the performance of schools in terms of performance in the system as a whole. This approach requires working with school staffs to allay fear, satisfy incentives and support change agents within the schools to bring about mutual adaptation in which new norms replace the old but with continuity in terms of the culture of the school. It is easier to get people in organizations to change their routines if the changes are congruent with the basic mission of the organization as they understand it.

In the case of 94-142, this is tricky since schools are so different, even in the same system. There could be many forms of mutual adaptation. How does one escape the twin dilemmas of uniform compliance with the letter or mutual adaptation in terms of many different spirits? It is at this point that the idea of comparative evaluation as a tool for steering is useful as a means to mutual adaptation within broad, acceptable guidelines.

William Boyd and Glenn Immegart believe that the best way to understand and lead organization is through "policy anaylsis" which continually seeks to join knowledge of organizational characteristics, implementation processes and outcomes.[23] We agree, but add the qualification that policy analysis only succeeds if it is an instrument in the hands of skillful leaders who understand bureaucratic processes. Implementation and evaluation planning can work if they are guided by knowledge of possibilities for organizational change and the limits to those possibilities.

There is an absence of concerted strategies for 94-142 implementation in the system which we have studied. Central administrators are concerned with overwhelming problems, especially the implementation of a new desegregation plan under the eye of the federal court. District leaders appear to seek administrative order and regularity and, within that, ad hoc and incremental improvement in the quality of schools. Special educators have the responsibility to implement 94-142 but lack the authority. Three different sets of routines make for a stable pattern of defensive bureaucratic politics in which there is minimal poaching across these invisible jurisdictions.

However, 94-142 cannot be effectively implemented without greater concerted planning and coordination by all three groups of administrators. Unless this happens, principals will be left to their own discretion and school routines will not be challenged.

It should be possible for the district superintendents and their staff and the central special education staff to develop a coherent implementation strategy. The chief ingredient would be regular conversations in which all schools in each district are considered as whole entities. The task would be to identify strengths and deficiencies in performance on 94-142 and develop ways to strengthen school capacities. Such an implementation plan would require agreement on criteria and measures of performance and discussion about alternative way to interpret the intent of the law. The achievement of such performance goals could be assessed by the development of a system of evaluation which would track each school in terms of 94-142 achievement of implementation. This comparative assessment of schools would guide decisions about the most rational allocation of limited resources, such as additional teachers or a new principal, to improve specific situations when the time is ripe for improvement.

However, this kind of rational planning is not systems management because it is carried out within a system of decentralized bureaucratic processes. Middle-level administrators work in ad hoc, indirect ways with principals and teachers to get them to accept new perspectives and change routines. But these managers have difficulties in cooperating with each other because they too are separated by differing bureaucratic stakes.

Furthermore, it is not easy for administrators to think about organization in terms of relating processes to outcomes. As we have seen, they think in terms of personalities, specific fires to be fought and conflict management and do not see administration as a research activity. The suggestion of developing an implementation plan, which can itself be evaluated by its authors, must be qualified by the degree to which administrators are consumed by particulars.

Organizational development is a useful strategy for gaining support for change within a larger strategy of administrative leadership. For example, a great deal could be done to create more receptive climates within schools for 94-142 if principals and teachers, who are informal leaders, were to conduct regular workshops in the school in which teachers could discuss the program and come to terms with it and each other.

However, if this strategy is to have any force, workshops would only be the beginning. Specifically, is it possible for us to prescribe concrete actions which might be taken to create the school climates which we have discovered to be conducive to implementation? What are the specific things which principals can do to be better principals? What are the precise forms of teacher interaction which are valued and how can these be fostered? And, what particular varieties of program structures complement such leadership and interactions?

An analysis of our exemplary principals, the authoritative democrats, uncovers several common characteristics:

1. They make their intentions clear.
2. They consult with teachers about those intentions.
3. They simplify the administrative tasks of teachers.

4. They are instructional leaders.

5. They instill pride in teachers about the educational purposes and achievements of the school.

School departments could train principals in techniques of leadership of this kind. But leadership style is an extension of basic personality and is therefore more intuitive than calculated. Good managers cannot be made creative through training. But the deficiencies of poor managers might be eased.

The following positive relationships among teachers within schools were found:

1. A shared sense of mission for the school.

2. Good collaborative relationships among teachers, usually because of the existence of a key bridging person such as the resource room teachers or a lead special education teacher.

3. The organization of teachers in ways that promote exchange of views such as shared curriculum planning.

Principals may foster such a climate by their actions but if a principal is simply an efficient manager rather than a creative leader, can a school district work around that person? They can and do place key lead teachers in schools with weak principals so that there is an instructional leader. And, of course, collegial forms of organization can be considered although this is less likely in small schools and no guarantee of a good atmosphere in any school.

Diverse program structures cannot and should not be standardized across schools because they will often be adopted but not implemented. Mutual adaptation and local invention are to be encouraged. For example, one school may find it desirable to have regular children tutor the handicapped and another may prefer to permit regular and special teachers to informally share students. All the standard methods, such as team teaching, ability grouping and open classrooms sound good but these techniques only work in the hands of skillful teachers who understand the relationship of technique to educational purpose. Leaders create such possibilities.

We conclude that techniques and organizational development are useful but that they must serve systems with strategies of steering based on awareness of bureaucratic stakes and incentives.

Bureaucratic politics about 94-142 was not highly developed in this school system. The few attempts to play this game were on the part of the weak. Special education was able to extract more teachers to reduce the waiting list by threatening embarrassing and expensive due process hearings. The chief psychologist attempted to invoke state monitoring of compliance against his own chiefs in a demand for increased staff. But the weak had so little bargaining leverage in the system that the general picture presented is one of a frozen dominance in which central and district administrators engaged in non-decisions, a failure to act in any way but through the most incremental change.

There will always be bureaucratic politics in any school system and school administrators must understand its particular characteristics as they also understand the more stable and routinized organizational incentives to which they must appeal. Bureaucratic politics are constantly shifting and cannot be explained by external forces alone. However, they are often tied to the demands of external groups such as boards of education, city councils, unions, parents and advocates, all of whom reinforce internal bureaucratic divisions. We have nothing novel to say here except that these horses must be ridden.

An interesting question for the future is whether or not the politics of 94-142 will become more intense. We may find analogies with the politics of school desegregation. In the future, the parents of children who are neither minorities nor handicapped may file state grievances against the school system for neglecting their children in efforts at compensatory education. However, the proponents of school desegregation and of 94-142 have argued that the implementation of civil rights laws will improve the education of all children.

Willis Hawley and his associates suggest that desegregation may be a catalyst for the improvement of schools.[24] The requirements for school desegregation may require substantial changes in the services schools offer and the ways they perform them which can revitalize schools so that all practices are questioned and new methods tried in a way that benefits all children. Forces for change can be strengthened, better trained staffs may be developed, and there may be a new search for answers to problems about educating children which go beyond desegregation. The very same claims could be made for 94-142 and we have seen evidence in this book that schools which appear to be of higher quality have taken 94-142 in stride. Whether the education of children who are not handicapped has been enhanced to any degree beyond what the schools were already doing is an unanswered question.

It is also suggested in the desegregation literature that racial desegregation improves the behavior and performance of teachers.[25] Classes are more heterogeneous and teachers are able to stereotype less. They also may demand higher student performance and self-discipline. Teachers and administrators in predominantly minority schools expect less of students than those in desegregated schools. It follows that integration might enhance expectations and levels of performance across the board. The same argument has been made in regard to the integration of handicapped children in regular schools.[26]

Assumptions about the benefits for minority and handicapped children which follow from these such propositions are beside the point here. If all children were to benefit from the implementation of 94-142 because schools change in positive directions, then there may be a minimal politics of opposition. However, it will take considerable organizational skill at the local level to create such schools and educate parents to the fact. If school administrators attempt to play zero-sum games in which they publicly deplore the lack of funds to carry out 94-142, and then find themselves in difficulty because state education agencies and courts say they must implement the law, we will have a zero-sum politics in which handicapped children will suffer.

Hawley and his associates find this to be a negative factor in desegregation.[27] Potential benefits of desegregation are not realized when the diversity which it produces overloads the capacity of schools to cope. It is not just a question of money but of organizational adaptation to the psychological stresses.

Synthesis

What do we conclude from these insights about the appropriate strategies for the heads of school districts who would carry out 94-142? The following propostions appear to us to be realistic:

1. Central administrators must keep an instructional overview.

2. Steering strategies and mechanisms must be developed and made to work in terms of incentives throughout the organization.

3. School autonomy and accountability must be balanced.

4. Success on the foregoing points is likely to reduce political backlash.

5. Federal and state regulations should be invoked as sticks and carrots in the form of rules to be obeyed and resources to be targeted on change agents and points of change.

Finally, it is not realistic to expect any school system to develop such elaborate strategies to implement only one among several high priority measures. It is better to conceive of all of them as flourishing with a general style of authority in which autonomy and accountability are balanced and the individuality of children is prized.

Conclusion

We have written a theoretically attuned case study to illuminate a generic set of problems. This is not a study of a single school but of several schools and it has the advantages of case studies in that the institutional "black box" is thoroughly explored. A comparative study of a large number of school systems which used aggregate data would have surely produced interesting correlations. Our work may have been necessary to discover the important variables to guide research on a larger scale. Survey research cannot reveal the dynamic interactions of levels of government which we have shown or the horizontal and vertical relationships within and across one school system. Research on implementation badly needs ethnographic studies because statutes and regulations should be based on knowledge of the grass roots. This is not to argue against large survey studies and aggregate data but to suggest that they should be combined with the kinds of case studies presented here.

Our research problems were the administrative problems of the implementors of 94-142 at all levels. For example, just as we struggled to find criteria and measures for implementation, so must they. We are in advance of the actual implementation of the law by virtue of having gone beyond compliance to ask about the development of effective service strategies. We do not reach far enough in the sense that subsequent research should incorporate treatment and outcome variables.

This book began with the statement that it would be a contribution to the union of theories of compliance with regulatory mandates and theories of organizational innovation. Our attention has been directed to practical, prescriptive questions about how government could better develop regulatory strategies which will tap forces for organizational innovation. We think that "theory" in this sense guides the following propositions:

1. Compliance strategies are a necessary but insufficient part of the federal armory. Ways must be found to change grass roots routines.

2. Such routines are best understood after a period of initial experience of implementation. They are not likely to be sufficiently understood in advance to be made part of implementation estimates. These are not the kinds of questions raised during the period of discussion of regulations before they are put into effect. Routines at the grass roots are also best discovered through systematic research which can provide solid and empirical foundations for revised, targeted regulations.

3. Informal implementation strategies depend on formal rules but extend them. Perhaps in time, we will be able to understand which informal strategies are necessary to the implementation of given classes of programs and work at the beginning of programs to develop such strategies.

4. Complete federal delegation of responsibility for implementation of measures like 94-142 to state agencies would be an abdication of federal responsibility.

Insofar as possible, the federal role should be monitoring, devising regulations based on backward mapping, and research and development and technical assistance.

5. The capacities of state agencies to assume the responsibilities for implementation of complex, federal statutes of this kind is very questionable and is an important area for future research.

As a final word, we must admit that implementation, as we have used the term, may be only indirectly, if at all, related to favorable outcomes for children. It may be necessary but not sufficient. Other factors may be much more important for the effective treatment of children. Therefore, implementation and evaluation research should be joined.

We do not know whether 94-142 is good for children. The evidence in advance was mixed and limited. On balance, we conclude that it probably is beneficial. Therefore, the real question is how good it is for children. One must then ask if the results justify the expense in the face of all the other demands on education and public budgets. These questions are particularly difficult in regard to the treatment of the severely retarded. But what if evaluation research suggests that mildly retarded students are no better off than they were in special schools or are even worse off, not only academically but in terms of self-esteem? What if the gains are very limited? How will democracy come to grips with such questions?

In our current political climate, these questions are not likely to be raised directly and openly. Rather, policies will be muted through partial and selective implementation. This is unfortunate because it breeds cynicism among those who had high expectations and fosters a manipulative way of working among school people. It would be much better to come to grips with reality and emphasize limited, manageable targets. But it is not clear whether symbolic politics will permit such realism. On the other hand, 94-142 may reveal great progress but show it to be uneven across the country. If so, then the strategies suggested in this book are appropriate for the long term.

Footnotes

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[3] Theodore Lowi, The End of Liberalism, (Chicago: W. W. Norton, 1969), 298.

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[5] Paul T. Hill, "Enforcement and Informal Pressure in the Management of Federal Categorical Programs in Education," a Rand note prepared for the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, N-1232-HEW (August 1979).

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[17] Charles E. Bidwell, "The School as a Formal Organization: Some New Thoughts," Glenn L. Immegart and William Lane Boyd, eds., *Problem Findings in Educational Administration* (Lexington: D. C. Heath & Co., 1979), 117.

[18] *Ibid.*, 119-124.

[19] Elmore, "Organizational Models," 199.

[20] Jerald Hage and Michael Aiken, *Social Change in Complex Organizations* (New York: Random House, 1970).

[21] Elmore," Organizational Models," 209.

[22] *Ibid.*, 217.

[23] Glenn L. Immegart and William Lane Boyd, "Education's Turbulent Environment and Problem-Finding: Lines of Convergence," in Immegart and Boyd, op. cit., 284.

[24] Willis D. Hawley, *Increasing the Effectiveness of School Desegregation: Lessons from the Research*, Center for Educational Policy, Institute of Policy Sciences and Public Affairs, (Duke University, 1980), 33.

[25] *Ibid.*, 42-46.

[26] Lloyd Dunn, "Special Education for the Mildly Retarded--Is Much of It Justifiable?" *Exceptional Children* 35 (Sept. 1968), 5-22.

[27] Hawley, op. cit., 46-47.

APPENDIX I

Survey Questionnaires

Regular Education Teachers (Elementary)

For each question, please circle the number of the choice that comes closest to describing your response or fill in the blanks that are provided, as appropriate.

We appreciate your cooperation in completing this questionnaire. Thank you.

1. How many years have you been teaching elementary school? ______

2. How many years have you been teaching in the this public school system? ________

3. How many years have you been teaching in your present school? ______

4. How much course work in education at the college or university level have you taken since you completed your Bachelor's degree?

   1) None

   2) some course work but no other degree

   3) Masters degree

   4) some coursework beyond Masters

   5) Doctorate

5. In any of your training, have you ever had specific instruction in working with handicapped children?

   1) yes

   2) no

6) Do you have a child identified as handicapped in your classroom this year?

   1) yes

   2) no

7. Do you have any children in your classroom who go to special education classes?

   1) yes

   2) no

8. Do you take special education pupils into your classes for special projects?

   1) yes

   2) no

9. How well acquainted do you feel that you are with the provisions of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142)?

   1) well acquainted

   2) familiar with some of its provisions

   3) have very little information about its provisions

   4) have no information at all

10. How much effect do you think the law (94-142) will have on the average classroom teacher in your school?

   1) a large effect

   2) a moderate effect

   3) very little effect

   4) no effect

   5) undecided

11. Do you think that handicapped children ought to be educated in a regular classroom setting?

   1) yes

   2) no

   3) undecided

12. How easy do you think it will be for your school to meet the requirements of the law?

    1) very easy
    2) moderately easy
    3) moderately difficult
    4) very difficult
    5) impossible

13. During the last five years, have you had a child in your classroom whom you felt was handicapped in some way but who was not receiving special education help?

    1) yes
    2) no

    If yes, did you refer this child for evaluation?

    1) yes
    2) no

14. How many children do you feel are now in regular classrooms in your school and are receiving no special education help but who probably ought to be receiving special education help?

    1) many
    2) a few
    3) none

15. Have you ever participated in the writing of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for a child?

    1) yes
    2) no

    If yes, did you find the preparation of the IEP to be

    1) very easy
    2) reasonably easy
    3) reasonably difficult
    4) very difficult

If no, do you feel that the preparation of the IEP would be

1) very easy
2) reasonably easy
3) reasonably difficult
4) very difficult

16. How well do you feel that your teacher training or experience as a teacher prepared you to work with handicapped children in a regular classroom setting?

1) not at all
2) poorly
3) adequately
4) extremely well

17. How often have you personally worked with teachers or staff from the special education program?

1) frequently
2) occasionally
3) seldom
4) never

If you have worked with special education staff before, have you generally found them to be

1) easier to work with than regular teachers.
2) more difficult to work with than regular teachers.
3) no different from regular teachers to work with.

18. Do you think that, in general, parents

1) make too many demands of teachers.
2) make reasonable demands of teachers.
3) make too few demands of teachers.

19. Do you think most parents understand their children's educational needs

1) well
2) adequately
3) poorly
4) not at all

20. Do you think your principal does the best he/she can to make your job as easy as possible?

    1) yes

    2) no

21. Does your principal respond to suggestions from teachers about school policies?

    1) often

    2) sometimes

    3) never

22. Does your principal seek suggestions from teachers about school policies?

    1) often

    2) sometimes

    3) never

23. Do you think your principal

    1) should take more advice from teachers about school matters.

    2) should take less advice from teachers.

    3) takes about the right amount of advice from teachers.

24. Do you think that your principal

    1) knows a great deal about what goes on in individual classrooms

    2) knows something of what goes on in individual classrooms

    3) knows very little about what goes on in individual classrooms

25. Do you feel that your district superintendent

    1) knows a great deal about what goes on in individual schools in his district.

    2) knows something about what goes on in individual schools in his district.

3) knows very little about what goes on in individual schools in his district.

26. For the most part, do you feel that the school system's central administrators

1) know a great deal about what goes on in individual schools.
2) know something about what goes on in individual schools.
3) know very little about what goes on in individual schools.

27. Do you think your principal influences what goes on in individual classrooms

1) too much
2) about the right amount
3) not enough

28. Do you think that the central administrators influence what is going on in individual schools

1) too much.
2) about the right amount.
3) not enough.

29. Do you think that your district superintendent influences what is going on in the individual schools in your district

1) too much.
2) about the right amount.
3) not enough.

30. Do you think that the state government influences what goes on in public schools

1) too much.
2) about the right amount.
3) not enough.

31. Do you think that the federal government influences what goes on in public schools

    1) too much.

    2) about the right amount.

    3) not enough.

32. Do you feel that the federal government should provide more funds for the public schools?

    1) yes

    2) no

33. Is P.L. 94-142 a good thing for public education in this city? If yes, why? If no, why? (Use space which follows.)

    1) yes

    2) no

34. Sex

    1) male

    2) female

35. Age ______

Special Education Teachers (Elementary)

For each question, please circle the number of the choice that comes closest to describing your response or fill in the blanks that are provided, as appropriate.

We appreciate your cooperation in completing this questionnaire. Thank you.

1. How many years have you been teaching elementary school? ______

2. How many years have you been teaching in the public school system?

   ______

3. How many years have you been teaching in your present school? ____

4. How much course work in education at the college or university level have you taken since you completed your Bachelor's degree?

   1) none

   2) some course work but no other degree

   3) Master's degree

   4) some course work beyond Masters

   5) Doctorate

5. In your present position, which of the following disability categories do you work with? (Circle more than one category, if applicable.)

   1) CD I (TMR)

   2) CD II (EMR)

   3) CD III (LD)

   4) PH

   5) HI

   6) VI

   7) VE (Resource Rm)

   8) Other

   (Specify)______

6. How well acquainted do you think regular education teachers in your school are with the requirements of the Education for All Handicapped Children Law (94-142)?
    1) well acquainted
    2) familiar with some of its provisions
    3) have very little information about its provisions
    4) have no information at all

7. How much effect do you think the law (94-142) will have on the average classroom teacher in your school?
    1) a large effect
    2) a moderate effect
    3) very little effect
    4) no effect
    5) undecided

8. How much effect do you think the law (94-142) will have on your work?
    1) a large effect
    2) a moderate effect
    3) very little effect
    4) no effect
    5) undecided

9. Do you think that handicapped children ought to be educated in a regular classroom setting to the fullest possible extent?
    1) yes
    2) no
    3) undecided

10. How easy do you think it will be for your school to meet the requirements of the law?
    1) very easy
    2) moderately easy
    3) moderately difficult
    4) very difficult
    5) impossible

11. From your observations, how well do regular teachers in your school detect children with special education needs?
    1) extremely well
    2) moderately well
    3) poorly

12. How well do most regular teachers in your school perform in referring these children for evaluation?
    1) extremely well
    2) moderately well
    3) poorly

13. How many children do you feel are now in regular classrooms in your school and are receiving no special education help but who probably ought to be receiving special education help?
    1) many
    2) a few
    3) none

14. How well prepared are regular classroom teachers in your school to participate in the writing of IEPs?
    1) well prepared
    2) adequately prepared
    3) poorly prepared

15. In your opinion, how well prepared are regular education teachers in your school to work with handicapped children in a regular classroom setting?

1) well prepared

2) adequately prepared

3) poorly prepared

16. Do you think that regular education teachers in your school find working with special education staff to be

1) easy

2) somewhat difficult

3) extremely difficult

17. Do you think that, in general, parents of exceptional children

1) make too many demands of teachers.

2) make reasonable demands of teachers.

3) make too few demands of teachers.

18. Do you think most parents of exceptional children understand their children's educational needs

1) well.

2) adequately.

3) poorly.

4) not at all.

19. Do you think your principal does the best he/she can to make your job as easy as possible?

1) yes

2) no

20. Does your principal listen as readily to special education teachers as to regular teachers?

1) yes

2) no

21. Does your principal respond to suggestions from teachers about school policies?
    1) often
    2) sometimes
    3) never
22. Does your principal seek suggestions from teachers about school policies?
    1) often
    2) sometimes
    3) never
23. Do you think your principal
    1) should take more advice from teachers about school matters.
    2) should take less advice from teachers.
    3) takes about the right amount of advice from teachers.
24. Do you think that your principal
    1) knows a great deal about what goes on in individual classrooms.
    2) knows something of what goes on in individual classrooms.
    3) knows very little about what goes on in individual classrooms.
25. Do you think that your principal
    1) knows a great deal about special education programs in the school.
    2) knows something about special education programs in the school.
    3) knows very little about special education programs in the school.

26. Do you feel that your district superintendent
    1) knows a great deal about what goes on in individual schools in his district.
    2) knows something about what goes on in individual schools in his district.
    3) knows very little about what goes on in individual schools in his district.

27. For the most part, do you feel that the school system's central administrators
    1) know a great deal about what goes on in individual schools.
    2) know something about what goes on in individual schools.
    3) know very little about what goes on in individual schools.

28. Do you think that your principal influences what goes on in individual classrooms
    1) too much.
    2) about the right amount.
    3) not enough.

29. Do you think that the central administrators influence what is going on in individual schools
    1) too much
    2) about the right amount.
    3) not enough.

30. Do you think that your district superintendent influences what is going on in the individual schools in your district
    1) too much.
    2) about the right amount.
    3) not enough.

31. Do you think that the state government influences what goes on in public schools
    1) too much.
    2) about the right amount.
    3) not enough.

32. Do you think that the federal government influences what goes on in public schools
    1) too much.
    2) about the right amount.
    3) not enough.

33. Do you feel that the federal government should provide more funds for the public schools?
    1) yes
    2) no

34. Is P.L. 94-142 a good thing for public education in this city? If no, why? (Use space which follows.)
    1) yes
    2) no

35. Does 94-142 lead special education in the best possible direction from the standpoint of the well-being of exceptional children?
    1) yes
    2) no

    If no, why not? (Use space which follows.)

36. Sex
    1) male
    2) female

37. Age ______

APPENDIX II

Interview Schedules

Central and District Administrators

1. What does 94-142 require this school system to do that the system has not already been doing?

2. What specific goals do you expect to be realized during the first year of implementation of 94-142? (Which objectives do you feel have already been met?)

3. How would you assess the capacities of this school system to implement the law?

4. Will adaptations be required in the schools for the law to be implemented? If so, what?

5. What obstacles are likely to arise to such adaptations?

6. What strategies and resources exist within the system for implementing the law?

7. What incentives does the school system have at its disposal for encouraging the kinds of adaptations which are required of individuals by 94-142?

8. What sanctions, if any, exist for overcoming resistance to the implementation of the law from within the school system?

9. How will the school system monitor its own progress in implementing 94-142?

10. Have you had any surprises thus far with regard to the implementation of 94-142 in the schools or have things gone pretty much as you initially anticipated?

11. Who are the people in the system who are particularly crucial for the successful implementation of the law?

12. How has this school system been mobilized for innovation in the past? e.g., by command from the top, by participatory planning, by a mix of command and participation? (Seek examples.)

    --Which approach do you feel is generally most effective for achieving desired changes? Why?

13. Does the decentralized organizational structure of the school system facilitate, complicate, or have no real effect upon the implementation of system-wide policies such as 94-142? Why?

14. Is pressure being applied from outside the school system as a result of the law? (If no, do you anticipate such pressure arising either for or against implementation of 94-142?)

15. How have relationships between the school system and other agencies concerned with services for the handicapped changed as a result of the law?

16. Are there policies unrelated to 94-142 being implemented within the school system at this time which could complicate or facilitate the implementation of 94-142?

17. What are the attitudes in the school system regarding 94-142? Is there any opposition to the requirements of the law?

18. Do you think that the objectives of 94-142 are entirely commendable or are there implications of the law that are open to criticism?

19. Is 94-142 a reasonable law? Are its requirements realistic?

20. Will the problems of implementing the law be any different in the high schools than in the elementary schools?

Central Administrators Only

21. Compare the three school districts by your estimate of the relative ease or difficulty of implementation within each district. Do the differences, if any, derive from attributes of the major actors in each district, from demographic characteristics of the districts or what?

22. What are your personal responsibilities for the implementation of the law?

    a. How will you carry them out?

    b. Who are you relying on to help you?

Special Education Consultants

1. How many referrals in school X during the past year?

2. What were the sources of the referrals? (Estimate proportion from each source - parents, teachers, other school personnel.)

3. Do reasons for referrals (academic, emotional, behavioral, etc.) vary according to the source of referral?

4. Describe the referral-evaluation-staffing-placement process as you see it.

   a. At what point(s) can the process be stopped (child retained in regular classroom?) How often does this happen? (Probe: If seldom, why not?)

   b. How much time elapses from 1 point in the process to the next?

   c. What proportion of children staffed are placed in:

      1. Special ed. setting other than home school.

      2. Special ed. setting in home school.

      3. Regular ed. setting with special ed. services.

      4. Regular ed. setting without special ed. services.

5. What people do you consult with about the child before the staffing? (teachers, principals, parents, others?)

   a. Do you meet with these people individually or in a group?

   b. How often do you meet with each of these people?

   c. What proportion of the time is spent with:

      the child

      teachers

      parents

      principals and other school personnel

6. Who is involved in the staffing meeting?

   a. How are these people decided upon?

7. Where are the staffing meetings held? Why?

8. What steps are taken to include parents? (Extent to which time and place are made convenient for parents? Proportion of parents accompanied by advocate or other representative.)

   a. Percentage of parents who attend.

   b. Characteristics (nature of handicap) of the children in relation to attendance of parents.

   c. Characteristics (SES - Race) of parents who attend and who do not attend.

9. What information is presented at the staffing? By whom?

10. What is considered in the placement decision? (Ideally? Actually? Probe for both.) Problems presented, services available, service location, transportation, etc.

11. Do professionals often disagree about the outcomes of staffing meetings?

    a. Are you generally satisfied that the outcome is in the child's best interest?

12. Do you think that the current classification categories are meaningful and useful? Why or why not? (Probe for EMR-LD differences.)

13. What percentage of parents object to decision reached?

    What is the nature of the objections in relation to the characteristics of the parents? (Probe)

    How are these resolved? (Ask for an example.)

14. How would you characterize the implementation of 94-142 in this school? Probe particularly for principal's role.

15. Do you find it more comfortable to work in some of your schools than in others?

    Which ones?

    Why?

16. How do you feel about your working relations with each of the principals? (Probe for differences and reasons why.)

17. Does the possibility of a request of a due process hearing from parents influence the decision-making process? If so, how?

    How are actual requests for due process hearings handled?

    How would you characterize the kinds of parents who push for hearings?

18. What is the principal objective you keep in mind during the referral, evaluation, staffing, placement process?

19. Are there variations among the school psychologists that go beyond personality? Can you categorize the variations?

20. Do these differences affect outcomes for children?

21. How would you sort out these particular psychologists according to these categories?

Principals (Elementary)

Part I

1. What does 94-142 require your school to do that you have not done before?

2. What specific goals do you expect to realize during the first year of full implementation of 94-142?

3. How would you assess the capacities of this school system to implement the law?

   How would you assess the capacities of this school to implement the law?

4. What are the attitudes in the school system regarding 94-142?

   Is there any opposition to the requirements of the law?

5. What attitudes exist in this school regarding the law?

   Is there opposition?

6. Will people in this school have to make personal adjustments in order for this law to be implemented?

   What sorts of adjustments?

   Are these adjustments likely to be made easily?

7. How have you approached the implementation of policy changes in your school before?

   By directive, by participatory planning, or by a mix of directive and participation?

   Which approach do you feel is generally most effective for achieving desired changes?

   Why?

8. How well do you think the average teacher in your school understands the requirements of 94-142?

9. Do you think your regular education teachers feel competent to teach handicapped children in a regular classroom setting?

10. How do you select the regular classroom teachers who will receive handicapped children in their classes?

11. How easy is it for regular classroom teachers and special education teachers to work together more closely in accord with the requirements of 94-142?

12. How do you keep yourself informed about what goes on in your school?

    How do you keep yourself informed about what goes on with regard to 94-142?

13. How do you find out what your teachers are thinking?

14. Are teachers quick to complain if they disagree with a policy or directive from you?

15. Are there people in your school whom you talk to more than other people about school matters?

16. Do you feel responsible for knowing what goes on in individual classrooms?

17. How do you convey your ideas to your teachers about changes and improvements that you would like to see made in your school?

18. How do you go about dealing with conflicts and disagreements among members of your staff?

    What kinds of conflicts emerge?

19. What do you think your teachers expect of you as their principal?

20. How do you divide your time?

    What sorts of activities take most of your time?

21. How often do your teachers meet as a faculty?

22. Do you think that the objectives of 94-142 are entirely commendable or are there implications of the law that are open to criticism?

23. Is 94-142 a reasonable law?

    Are its requirements realistic?

24. What do you see as your personal obligations in the implementation of 94-142 in your school?

    How will you carry them out?

25. How long have you been a principal?

    How long have you been a principal in this school?

26. How long were you a teacher before you became a principal?

27. Did you participate in the SAGE workshops for principals?

If yes, did you find them useful?

Part II

1. What sorts of handicaps or disabilities are represented among the children in this school?

2. In recent years, have many children from your school been referred and evaluated for special education placement?

3. Have you participated in the writing of IEPs for any of the children in your school?

If yes, how difficult a process was it?

4. What strategies and resources do you have at your disposal for seeing that 94-142 is implemented in your school?

5. What incentives can you offer for encouraging the kinds of adaptations which are required of individuals by 94-142?

6. What sanctions can you employ for overcoming resistance to the implementation of the law from within your school?

7. How do you monitor progress in implementing 94-142 in your school?

8. Have you had any surprises thus far with regard to the implementation of 94-142 in your school, or have things gone pretty much as you initially anticipated?

9. How much latitude do you feel that you have regarding the specifics of implementing this law in your school?

As a principal, what decisions are left to you to make?

10. Does the decentralized organizational structure of the school system facilitate, complicate, or have no real effect upon the imple- mentation of system-wide policies such as 94-142?

11. Of district-level personnel, whom do you work with most closely concerning the implementation of 94-142?

12. Is the district special education consultant an important resource for you in implementing the law in your school?

Why or why not?

13. How much attention do you think the central administration pays to what goes on in individual schools?

14. How much attention do you think the district superintendent pays to what goes on in individual schools?

15. How much effect do you think the opinions of principals has on district-level policies?

    System-level policies?

16. If you feel that a policy or directive from the district office or the central office would be bad for your school, whom do you talk to about it?

17. Task Force MOVE has suggested that the central authority in the metropolitan school system should be more focused and more active.

    Do you think that recommendation is valid?

    Why?

18. Is there sufficient autonomy for the individual school in this system or would greater autonomy be beneficial for the operation of the schools?

19. Is pressure being applied on your school from outside the school system as a result of the law?

    If no, do you anticipate such pressure arising, either for or against implementation?

20. How do you deal with complaints from parents?

21. How well do you think most parents understand the educational needs of their children?

22. Do parents ask too much of the public schools, too little of the public schools, or are most parents realistic in their expectations of the schools?

Regular Education Teachers (Elementary)

1. How many students do you teach?

2. Do you have children in your classroom who receive special education services?

    a. If so, how many?

    b. What are their disabilities?

3. Have children been mainstreamed into your class from a special education class this year? Last year?

    a. If so, how many?

    b. What programs did they come from?

4. Have you referred children from your class for evaluation and special education placement?

    a. How many resource room?

    b. How many other special ed.?

    c. Were they given those services?

5. Has there been a push for implementing P.L. 94-142 in the metropolitan schools?

    a. If so, where did it come from? What form did it take?

    b. Has there been a push for implementation in this school?

    c. If so, where did it come from? What form did it take?

    d. What has the principal done with regard to this law?

6. Have you noticed any changes in the relationship between special ed. and regular ed. since P.L. 94-142 has been in effect?

    a. If so, what sorts of changes have you noticed?

7. Do you think there is a difference between the educational concepts used by special ed. and those of general education?

   In what ways?

8. Do you think that handicapped children should be educated in a regular classroom setting?

   Why or why not?

   Do you see differences according to handicapping conditions?

9. How often do you have occasion to work with other teachers in this school?

   a. Whom do you work with most often in this school?

   b. On what sorts of activities or problems do you usually work with other teachers?

10. As you see it, what is the role of a school principal? (Probe, if necessary: What functions do you think teachers can reasonably expect their principals to perform?)

    a. Assuming that all of us have strengths and weaknesses, how would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of your principal, in terms of your own criteria?

11. What do you think the principal's role in implementing P.L. 94-142 should be?

    a. Assuming we all have strengths and weaknesses, how would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of your principal in performing this role?

12. How long have you worked with your current principal?

    a. Have you worked with other principals?

    (If yes) How does your current principal compare with the others you have worked with in terms of your own criteria?

    (If no) From what you might have heard from other teachers, how do you think your principal would compare with other ones, in terms of your own criteria?

13. Everyone who is responsible for managing a group of employees has his or her own way of filling this role and seeing that things get done; they develop their own style as a leader. While this is no doubt a highly individual process, people probably fall into certain patterns of doing things that can be grouped together. I will describe for you three general types of leadership and ask you which type you think fits your principal best:

a) This person believes that it takes a strong authority to get people to do their jobs well. He likes to make decisions himself and closely supervises employees to see that decisions and plans are carried out.

b) This person believes that people basically like to work and will do their best job if they are involved in making decisions and then left pretty much on their own to carry them out.

c) This person believes that people do not need strong personal authority or supervision once they know the rules and guidelines.

d) If none of these seem applicable, could you describe your principal's style of leadership as you see it?

14. What do you like best about teaching in this school?

    a. What would you most like to see changed about this school?

15. What do you see as the biggest problems confronting you in your job?

    a. What sorts of changes would be required to alleviate these problems?

16. Whom do you see informally during the school day?

Special Education Teachers (Elementary)

1. How many different students do you teach?
    a. How often do you see them?
    b. What kinds of disabilities or handicaps do they have?
    c. How many of your students are partially mainstreamed?
    d. For what activities do they go to other classrooms?
2. How often do you have occasion to work with other teachers in this school?
    a. Whom do you work with most often in this school?
    b. On what sorts of activities or problems do you usually work with other teachers?
3. How many of your students have moved into regular classrooms this year?
4. How many of your students do you anticipate moving into regular classrooms next year?
5. Has there been a push for implementing P.L. 94-142 in the metropolitan schools?
    a. If so, where (or whom) did it come from? What form did it take?
    b. Has there been a push for implementation in this school?
    c. If so, where (or whom) did it come from? What form did it take?
    d. What has the principal been doing with regard to this law?
6. How much contact do you have with the district special ed. consultant?
    a. How much contact do you have with the special ed. staff in the central office?
    b. Do you find them helpful? If so, in what ways?
7. Have you ever taught regular education?
    a. If so, for how long?
    b. How long ago was this?
8. Have you noticed any changes in the relationships between special ed. and regular ed. teachers since P.L. 94-142 has been in effect?

a. If so, what sorts of changes have you noticed?

b. Have you noticed any changes since the enactment of the State law?

c. If so, what sorts of changes have you noticed?

9. How easy do you think it is for general educators without formal training in special ed. to grasp the major concepts of special education?

   a. How easily do you think they grasp the methods and techniques used to teach children in special ed.?

10. As you see it, what is the role of a school principal? (Probe, if necessary: What functions do you think teachers can reasonably expect their principals to perform?)

    a. Assuming that all of us have strengths and weaknesses, how would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of your principal, in terms of your own criteria?

11. What do you think the principal's role in implementing P.L. 94-142 should be?

    a. Assuming we all have strengths and weaknesses, how would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of your principal in performing this role?

12. How long have you worked with your current principal?

    a. Have you worked with other principals?

    (If yes) How does your current principal compare with the others you have worked with in terms of your own criteria?

    (If no) From what you might have heard from other teachers, how do you think your principal would compare with other ones, in terms of your own criteria?

13. Everyone who is responsible for managing a group of employess has his or her own way of filling this role and seeing that things get done; they develop their own style as a leader. While this is no doubt a highly individual process, people probably fall into certain patterns of doing things that can be grouped together. I will describe for you three general types of leadership and ask you which type you think fits your principal best:

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d) If none of these seem applicable, could you describe your principal's style of leadership as you see it?

14. What do you like best about teaching in this school?

a. What would you most like to see changed about this school?

15. What do you see as the biggest problems confronting you in your job?

a. What sorts of changes would be required to alleviate these problems?

16. Whom do you spend time with of the other teachers? (When and how? -- lunch time, breaks, etc.)

17. Do you feel you have enough interaction with other teachers?

18. Suppose we wanted to interview the regular teachers in this school who are the most receptive and the least receptive to the aims and objectives of this law. Of the regular teachers here, whom would you suggest?

Resource Room Teachers

1. What is your role in referrals made by classroom teachers?

2. Do you think some teachers are too quick to refer children for evaluation?

   a. If yes, how extensive is it in this school?

   b. Why do you think this happens?

3. Do you automatically refer children who come to your resource class for psychological evaluation?

4. How does the principal affect the referral process in this school?

5. Show refer-staffing figures for the school; point out that they are for last year (1978-79).

   Question: How many of the kids who were referred but not staffed were enrolled in the resource program?

   How many were sent back to the classroom without additional services because the psychologist recommended that special ed. services were not necessary?

   a. Do you know of any cases last year in which a parent refused to allow a staffing when it was recommended by the psychologist?

6. In this school, who informs parents about staffings and encourages them to participate in the staffing?

7. Do you have knowledge of how many parents participated in these staffings last year?

   a. If yes, is this a fairly typical rate of participation?

8. Do you have any way of knowing where children who go to a staffing are finally placed?

   a. If yes, can you tell me about the placements of children staffed last year?

9. In your opinion, do placements for most children correspond closely to staffing recommendations?

10. How are parents involved in the writing of IEPs in this school?

    a. If parents can be involved, how often do they participate?

Psychologists (Elementary)

1. How many referrals in school X during the past year?

2. What were the sources of the referrals? (Parents, teachers, other school personnel.) (Estimate proportion from each source - parents, teachers, other school personnel.)

3. Do reasons for referrals (academic, emotional, behavioral, etc.) vary according to the source of referral?

4. Describe the referral-evaluation-staffing-placement process as you see it.

   Probes:

   a. At what point(s) can the process be stopped (child retained in regular classroom?) How often does this happen? (Probe: if seldom, why not?)

   b. How much time elapses from 1 point in the process to the next?

   c. What proportion of children staffed are placed:

      1. Special ed. setting other than home school.

      2. Special ed. setting in home school.

      3. Regular ed. setting with special ed. services.

      4. Regular ed. setting without special ed. services.

5. What do you do when you first enter a case? (What do you do first: see child, review records, etc.?)

6. How many times do you see the child?

7. In what settings do you see the child?

8. What instruments are used in evaluating the child? (I.Q. tests, achievement tests, etc.)

9. Do you observe the child? If so, where?

10. What people do you consult with about the child before the staffing? (teachers, principals, parents, others?)

    a. Do you meet with these people individually or in a group?

    b. How often do you meet with each of these people?

c. What proportion of the time is spent with:

the child

teachers

parents

principals and other school personnel

11. What steps are taken to include parents? (Extent to which time and place are made convenient for parents? Proportion of parents accompanied by advocate or other representative.)

    a. Percentage of parents who attend.

    b. Characteristics (nature of the handicap) of the children in relation to attendance of parents.

    c. Characteristics (SES - Race) of parents who attend and who do not attend.

12. What information is presented? By whom?

13. What is considered in the placement decision? (Ideally? Actually? Probe for both.) Problems presented, services available, service location, transportation, etc.

14. Do professionals often disagree about the outcomes of staffing meetings?

    a. Are you generally satisfied that the outcome is in the child's best interest?

15. Do you think that the current classification categories are meaningful and useful? Why or why not?

16. What percentage of parents object to decision reached?

    What is the nature of the objections in relation to the characteristics of the parents? (Probe)

    How are these resolved? (Ask for an example.)

17. How would you characterize the implementation of 94-142 in this school? Probe particularly for principals' role.

18. Do you find it more comfortable to work in some of your schools than in others?

    Which ones?

    Why?

19. How do you feel about your working relations with each of the principals? Probe for differences and reasons why.

20. Does the possibility of a request of a due process hearing from parents influence the decision-making process? If so, how?

    How are actual requests for due process hearings handled?

    How would you characterize the kinds of parents who push for hearings?

21. What is the principal objective you keep in mind during the referral, evaluation, staffing, placement process?

Principals (Elementary): Referral-Staffing Process

1. How much involvement does the referral-staffing process require of you? How?

2. Are you ever asked to approve referrals that you think are unwarranted?

   a. If yes, how do you proceed on them?

3. Do you think teachers in your school are referring children for good reasons?

4. Do parents often push for evaluations?

5. Do you think your school psychologist does a good job of screening children for special ed. services?

   a. What services can be given to a child in this school without going to a staffing?

6. From your experience, does it ever happen that the psychologist recommends a child for staffing, but the staffing never takes place?

   a. If yes, for what reasons might this occur?

   b. Are you generally satisfied with the results of staffings?

7. We understand that central office makes placement decisions. How often is a child who goes to a staffing from this school placed in a program at this school?

8. How likely are parents in this school to participate in staffings and other aspects of the referral-staffing process?

9. Do you think that there is anything the school system could do to improve the referral-staffing process?

Principals (Secondary)

1. What does 94-142 require your school to do that was not done before? (Probe for historical changes.)

2. Describe the population of "handicapped" students in your school. (Cover all possible categories.)

   How many in each category?

3. Describe the educational plans and structures for them. (According to category.)

4. What criteria and signs do you use to judge whether the law is being properly implemented in this school?

   How do you learn what is happening?

5. Whom do you rely on for the implementation of the law?

6. What are the attitudes of teachers in this school toward the law?

   Is there opposition? Among which groups? Who supports?

7. What sorts of adjustments have to be made by teachers for the law to be implemented?

   Has this caused problems?

   How dealt with?

8. How would you characterize the relations of regular and special ed. teachers in this school? Do they work together on 94-142? If so, how?

9. Do some regular teachers teach handicapped students?

   If so, in what modes?

   Which teachers? Why them and not others?

10. What is your view about the categorization of handicapped students, e.g.

    Traditional categories - EMR, LD?

    General CD categories?

    CD4, behavior problem?

    What is the categorization system in this school? (Actual? Implicit?)

    How is it reflected in your programs for the handicapped?

11. Do some handicapped children drop out of school after age 16?

    What percent of the total?

    Is this a good or bad thing?

    How many students stay in school beyond the usual graduation age?

    What proportion of them are handicapped?

12. Do you have any special problems in regard to 94-142 which concern you?

13. What is the racial composition of your handicapped students population?

    Why this mix?

14. Describe these processes in your school in regard to 94-142.

    Referrals?

    Staffings?

    The writing of IEPs?

    Do you play a role in these processes? If so, what?

    Who are the key people in these processes?

    What do parents do? How would you characterize the degree and seriousness of parental participation?

15. How many new referrals did your school have in 1979-80?

    So far this year?

    How many staffings?

    If the first number is larger, why and what happened to the students?

    Where were the staffed students placed? (e.g., in this building?)

    Are any students sent elsewhere? If so, what kinds of students and how many?

16. Who does your school work with in the district and central office in regard to 94-142?

    Describe the relationships and relative responsibilities?

17. Who is primarily responsible for implementing 94-142 in this school system?

    What is your responsibility?

18. Do you think that 94-142 is a good policy?

    A realistic one?

19. How long have you been a principal?

    How long in this school?

    How long were you a teacher?

20. How do you allocate your time as principal?

    Why?

    Is this a good distribution or would you like to alter it? (Explain.)

    What are the most important things a principal does?

21. Whom do you rely on to help you administer the school?

    What do (they) do?

22. What do you think your teachers expect of you as their principal?

    Why?

    How do you act to meet these expectations?

23. How do you approach the implementation of policy changes in this school? (Probe after the question is answered as to directive or consultative style or a combination.)

    Why do you proceed this way?

24. How do you know what your teachers are thinking and know what goes on in the school?

25. Is this faculty influential as a faculty in school policies?

    If so, how so? Examples?

    How are faculty views represented? (Probe. Through department chairmen; faculty meetings, other.)

26. How do you lead the faculty in the face of disagreements?

27. Have you had to provide leadership in regard to the implementation of 94-142?

    If so, how so?

    Which groups had to be convinced of what?

    Are there other leaders within the school on 94-142?

28. How much or how little latitude to run their own schools are secondary principals given in this system?

    On what range of issues?

29. Who has a stronger influence on the programs of individual schools -- district offices or the Central Office? Explain with examples.

    Which are the key positions of authority as far as you are concerned?

Regular Education Teachers (Secondary)

1. What is your typical class size? How many classes do you teach?

2. Do you have children in your classroom who receive special education services?

   a. Which classes?

   b. If so, how many?

   c. What are their disabilities?

3. Have you referred children from your class for evaluation and special ed. placement?

   a. If yes, were they given those services?

4. Who has taken leadership in this school with regard to this law?

   a. What has the principal done with regard to this law?

5. Have you noticed any changes in the relationship between special ed. and regular ed. since P.L. 94-142 has been in effect?

   a. If so, what sorts of changes have you noticed?

6. Do you think there is a difference between your educational concepts and those used by special ed.?

   In what ways?

7. Do you think that handicapped children should be educated in a regular classroom setting?

   Why or why not?

   Do you see differences according to handicapping conditions?

8. As you see it, what is the role of a school principal? (Probe if necessary: What functions do you think teachers can reasonably expect their principals to perform?)

   a. Assuming that all of us have strengths and weaknesses, how would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of your principal, in terms of your own criteria?

9. What do you think the principal's role in implementing P.L. 94-142 should be?

    a. Assuming we all have strengths and weaknesses, how would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of your principal in performing this role?

10. How long have you worked with your current principal?

    a. Have you worked with other principals?

    (If yes) How does your current principal compare with the others you have worked with in terms of your own criteria?

    (If no) From what you might have heard from other teachers, how do you think your principal would compare with other ones, in terms of your own criteria?

11. How is this school administered?

    Who does the principal use as his key assistants to administer this school?

12. What do you like best about teaching in this school?

    a. What would you most like to see changed about this school?

Special Education Teachers (Secondary)

1. How many different students do you teach?
    a. How often do you see them?
    b. What kinds of disabilities or handicaps do they have?

    (Questions c and d should not be asked of resource teachers)

    c. How many of your students are partially mainstreamed?
    d. For what activities do they go to other classrooms?
2. How often do you have occasion to work with other teachers in this school?
    a. Whom do you work with most often in this school?
    b. On what sorts of activities or problems do you usually work with other teachers?

(Questions 3 and 4 should not be asked of resource teachers.)

3. How many of your students have moved into regular classrooms this year?
4. How many of your students do you anticipate moving into regular classrooms next year?
5. Has there been a push for implementing P.L. 94-142 in this school?
    a. If so, where (or whom) did it come from? What forms did it take?
    b. What has the principal been doing with regard to this law?
6. How much contact do you have with the district special ed. consultants?
    a. How much contact do you have with the special ed. staff in the central office?
    b. Do you find them helpful? If so, in what ways?
7. Have you ever taught regular education?
    a. If so, for how long?
    b. How long ago was this?
8. Have you noticed any changes in the relationships between special ed. and regular ed. teachers since P.L. 94-142 has been in effect?

    If so, what sorts of changes have you noticed?

9. How easy do you think it is for general educators without formal training in special ed. to grasp the methods and techniques used to teach students in special ed.?

10. As you see it, what is the role of a school principal? (Probe if necessary: What functions do you think teachers can reasonably expect their principals to perform?)

    Assuming that all of us have strengths and weaknesses, how would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of your principal, in terms of your own criteria?

11. What do you think the principal's role in implementing P.L. 94-142 should be?

    Assuming we all have strengths and weaknesses, how would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of your principal in performing this role?

12. How is this school administered?

    Whom does the principal use as his key assistants to administer the school? How?

    With whom do you work on policy/administrative matters?

13. What do you like best about teaching in this school?

    a. What would you most like to see changed about this school?

Psychologists (Secondary)

1. What were the sources of the referrals in these schools in 1978-79 and this year? (Parents, teachers, other school personnel.) (Estimate proportion from each source -- parents, teachers, other school personnel.)

2. Do reasons for referrals (academic, emotional, behavioral, etc.) vary according to the source of referral?

3. Describe the referral-evaluation-staffing-placement process as you see it, in these schools.

   How much time elapses from 1 point in the process to the next?

4. What do you do when you first enter a case? (What do you do first: see child, review records, etc.?) (To be asked only of psychologists who have not been interviewed.)

5. How many times do you see the child?

6. In what settings do you see the child?

7. What instruments are used in evaluating the child? (I.Q. tests, achievement tests, etc.)

8. Do you observe the child? If so, where?

9. What people do you consult with about the child before the staffing? (teachers, principals, parents, others?)

   a. Do you meet with these people individually or in a group?

   b. How often do you meet with each of these people?

   c. What proportion of the time is spent with:

      the child

      the teachers

      parents

      principals and other school personnel

10. What steps are taken to include parents? (Extent to which time and place are made convenient for parents? Proportion of parents accompanied by advocate or other representative.)

   a. Percentage of parents who attend.

   b. Characteristics (nature of the handicap) of the children in relation to attendance of parents.

   c. Characteristics (SES - Race) of parents who attend and who do not attend.

11. What information is presented? By whom?

12. What is considered in the placement decision? (Ideally? Actually? Probe for both.) (Problems presented, services available, service location, transportation, etc.)

13. Do professionals often disagree about the outcomes of staffing meetings?

   a. Are you generally satisfied that the outcome is in the child's best interest?

14. Do you think that the current classification categories are meaningful and useful? Why or why not?

15. How would you characterize the implementation of 94-142 in the schools we are studying? (Probe particularly for principal's role.)

16. Do you find it more comfortable to work in some of your schools than in others?

    Which ones?

    Why?

17. How do you feel about your working relations with each of the principals? Probe for differences and reasons why.

Guidance Counselors

1. What is your involvement with the special ed. population in this school?

2. Describe the referral and evaluation process in this school and your role in that process.

   What kinds of kids get referred?

   What are the likely outcomes of a referral?

   Is there a general pattern of referral among all teachers or is a particular group of teachers more likely to refer kids?

   What is the principal's role in the referral and evaluation process?

   What is the psychologist's role?

   What efforts are made to involve parents?

   How likely are they to participate in the process?

3. In the elementary schools, a sizeable portion of the special ed. population is classified as Learning Disabled. There is a much smaller LD program at the junior high level and no such program at all in the senior highs. What happens to those children who were in the LD programs in elementary schools?

4. In your estimation, how many kids are in the secondary schools who would qualify for and benefit from special ed. programs if more were available? How about this school? (a large number, a few, virtually none?)

5. How is the resource program used in this school?

6. Are there Title I or reading and math resource programs in this school?

   How are they used?

   How is it decided who will receive these services?

7. How are schedules developed for special ed. children?

   Who is involved?

   What kinds of classes do they go to?

8. How are IEPs written?

9. What is being done in this school to implement 94-142?

10. Have you perceived any real emphasis on implementing the education of the handicapped law (94-142) in this school?

    If so, where did it come from?

    Have there been any program changes or other sorts of changes in this school in the last couple of years which you think might have resulted from this law?

11. What are the attitudes among teachers in this school toward special ed. students?

    How receptive are they to having these students in regular programs?

12. Which regular teachers would you suggest that we talk to about special ed. children in the regular programs? We would be particularly interested in talking to any teachers who seem unusually favorable or unusually opposed to serving special ed. children in regular programs.